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AN

ENQUIRY

INTO THE CAUSES AND PRODUCTION OF

POVERTY,

AND

THE STATE OF THE POOR:

TOGETHER WITH THE PROPOSED

MEANS

FOR THEIR EFFECTUAL RELIEF.

BY *JOHN VANCOUVER.*

——NIL HUMANI A ME ALIENUM PUTO.

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1796.

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IMPRESSED with an idea, that whilſt the ſuperior orders of ſociety are anxiouſly ſolicitous to alleviate the ſufferings which ſo long have been patiently endured by the ſubordinate claſſes of the people; the ſuggeſtions, however humble, of any individual who may have thought intentively upon the ſubject, will not at this juncture be diſregarded as unworthy of notice, or be conſidered intruſive on the publick attention. Urged by this ſentiment of ſocial duty alone, the author has been tempted to venture, and to ſubmit his curſory obſervations to the general conſideration of the many, and the particular deciſion of the few whoſe hearts and minds are benevolently intereſted in this laudable undertaking; and he will be amply re-

warded, ſhould the following pages contain one ſingle idea worthy of adoption.

He is conſcious of his little pretenſions to diſcuſs ſo complex a queſtion as that which involves the intereſts of the whole, and the comforts of the major part of the community, in the way it demands; but reſts in full confidence, that, however deſervedly he may be ſubjected to cenſure as a writer, the cauſe he has eſpouſed will inſure him a free pardon as a man.

The following ſheets were ready for publication about the middle of laſt April; but under the idea of an approaching diſſolution of Parliament, their appearance was deferred until the publick mind ſhould be relieved from the agitation, conſequent on a general election.

No. 142, New Bond-street,
20th July, 1796.

AN ENQUIRY, &c.

PREVIOUS to the minute diſcuſſion of a ſubject which hath at times, during many ages, engaged the thoughts, and employed the pens of the moſt able politicians in this country, it is neceſſary clearly to underſtand, what is the object of the preſent enquiry. This may be reduced in a few words to the ſimple fact under which it is comprehended: "The cauſe of "poverty, and of the extremely miſerable ſtate "of the poor."

Unqueſtionably this lamentable condition, theſe ſad effects, have a cauſe whence they ariſe. Should this inveſtigation terminate in diſcovering the evil of poverty to originate in a phyſical cauſe, which it were impoſſible to remove, the human mind, with all deference and ſubmiſſion, muſt then yield to the great Diſpoſer of all things; who, for purpoſes beyond the narrow limits of mortal comprehenſion, thought fit to plant it there—there it muſt reſt!—The chari-

table offices of Chriſtian benevolence can alone meliorate the conditions it impoſes, or mitigate their deplorable effects. But if the enquiry in tracing the cauſe of poverty to its ſource, diſcover it to be of moral production, it is the incumbent duty of humanity, not only to overcome the impediments to its removal, but finally, to provide againſt its future growth or occurrence.

This may truly be conſidered an Herculean taſk; but in ſuch an enterprize, no degree of corporeal labour, or mental fatigue, can equal the abundance of reward that muſt await the accompliſhment of ſuch an object.

Let the difficulties to be ſurmounted, inſtead of one, be thouſands; let them multiply on the ſight of the projector like the ſummits of the lofty Appennine, the higher he aſcends; yet will the glorious, the benevolent cauſe in which he is engaged, give him faſt hold that his feet ſlip not, and ſupply him with ſtrength and courage to proſecute his laborious journey.

When the community * "was connected to-
"gether, it was found that a part only of ſociety
"was ſufficient to provide by their manual labour,
"for the neceſſary ſubſiſtence of all, and leiſure
"was given to the other, to cultivate the human

* Blackſtone's Commentaries.

" mind, to invent uſeful arts, and lay the found-
" ation of ſcience."

To diſcover the cauſe of poverty, and the reaſon why one diviſion of the community is liable, and the other not, to this calamity, it becomes neceſſary at firſt, to ſeparate the whole community as above, into two grand diviſions or ſocieties: (viz.) the ſociety of the rich, and in contradiſtinction, the ſociety of the poor; or, in other words, the ſociety of the *employers*, and the ſociety of the *employed*; it is totally unneceſſary on this view of this ſubject, to deſcant on the different ſorts of affluence belonging to the employers, whether real, manufactural, commercial, or compriſed under any other denomination of perſonal property; or of the different ſorts of indigence attached to the employed, in the peaſant, the humble or exalted mechanic, the artizan, or ſcientific ſtudent.

Suffice it to obſerve, that the property of the employers ariſes from the reſerved *transferable* proportion, which they contract for, out of the productive labour and ingenuity of the employed; and which is always in proportion to the means poſſeſſed for creating employment.

The property of the employed conſiſts in their *untransferable* ſtock of productive labour, whether of a corporeal, or mental quality; diſtinguiſhed by the terms labour, and ingenuity.

In political arithmetic, the amount of the ſum of the joint or capital ſtock in each ſociety, is held to be in favour of the employed. Whether this concluſion be founded, or not, is little to the preſent purpoſe; but, it ſhould ſeem, that the annual appropriation of ſo large a ſum as *three millions*, by the employers, to the neceſſities of the employed, might be offered in oppoſition to the opinion; and it would certainly have its full weight in the argument, were it not for the reaſons that will hereafter be aſſigned.

It hath ever been held as a maxim in all well governed ſtates, that the labour of a man ſhould not only be equal to his own ſupport; but to the maintenance, and rearing of his offspring; whilſt his health and ſtrength continue. The price, or value of his ſtock of labour, or ingenuity, ſhould and ought to be adequate to his own wants, and equal to thoſe of his family: nay, humanity directs, that it ſhould be ſomething more, which, by induſtry and frugality, might enable him to abate of his exertions, when the infirmities of age ſhould preſs hard upon him, or be the means of ſupplying him with food, when he is no longer able to procure a ſubſiſtence by his labour.

As the riches of every ſtate hath juſtly been conſidered the ſum of the productive labour and ingenuity of its inhabitants; ſo likewiſe the riches of the employers, is, as before ſtated, the ſhare

which each individual of that claſs contracts to reſerve, out of the productive labour and ingenuity of the employed, and is always in due proportion to the exciting power each employer may poſſeſs. It is the poſſeſſion of theſe means alone that conſtitutes *affluence*, and it is the want of theſe means that produces *indigence*.

It is not, however, intended to maintain a poſition, that the whole ſociety of the employed muſt neceſſarily be poor; all that is meant to be enforced is, that the members of this ſociety are more obnoxious to temporary, or permanent poverty, than are their more fortunate employers. Hence it will be found requiſite for the ſake of perſpicuity, to divide the ſecond diviſion of the community again, and in future to treat it under the diſtinct heads, of the ſociety of the employed, and, the ſociety of the poor. For the members in the ſociety of the employed, are poſitively not of the ſociety of the poor, *until* calamity, either of a permanent or temporary nature, force them into this humble fraternity.

As the mind of man is more prone to examine, and make itſelf acquainted with the dignities and elevated ſtations of thoſe who compoſe the ſociety of the affluent, or the employers, than to contemplate the humble or indigent ſituation of the ſociety of the employed, or the miſerably

wretched condition of the ſociety of the poor, it may not be improper to explain, how each of theſe latter ſocieties is conſtituted.

That of the employed, when *politically regarded*, may poſſibly be found to poſſeſs an equal *untranſferable* property, to that which is *tranſferable*, belonging to the other grand diviſion, their employers. It is true, this ſociety is *not poſſeſſed* of what the law denominates *real* or *perſonal* property. Its members have no eſtate in lands, in tenements, or other *real* property; or, in wares, merchandize, in money out at intereſt, or other *perſonal* property, ſave and except their humble ſtock of houſehold conveniencies, the produce of extraordinary exertion, the pride of their honeſt hearts, and the ſhining decoration of their lowly cots! *Their* property then can alone be comprized of each one's individual talent of labour or ingenuity; this, though of a very different quality, will not, perhaps, on appropriate inveſtigation, appear leſs valuable to the community at large, than the *real* or *perſonal* property veſted in their employers.

The ſociety of the poor, as to its being equally deſtitute of any legal property, is under ſimilar circumſtances with that of the employed; and to increaſe their meaſure of human wretchedneſs, the members unfortunately labour under ſome one or more of the following natural infirmities:

imbecility of mind, original weakneſs, or imperfection of body; feebleneſs of old age, and the general incapacity of infancy. To any one of theſe afflictions, add a ſcanty ſupply of food, and an almoſt total want of the other common neceſſaries of life, and ſurely the cup of human miſery muſt be filled to the brim!

There are two diſtinct ſorts of poverty; that which is *permanent* from phyſical inability; and that which is *temporary* from cauſes of a moral nature.

The pitiable mortals, above deſcribed, may truly be conſidered as being permanently of this wretched ſociety; others there are, who, but occaſionally belong to it. There are thoſe who are under no phyſical incapacity of a chronic or laſting nature, but are in the full enjoyment of their mental faculties, and uſe of their limbs; yet, like the former, being deſtitute of any transferable property, in the event of accidental miſchance, ſuſpenſion of health, want of employment, or when the price of a day's ſubſiſtence exceeds the current price of daily labour, are reduced to the like condition of poverty.

Such of the employed as are deprived of their only property, *labour*, by epidemic or other cauſes, ſo long as they endure the calamity, having no transferable ſurplus property whatever in themſelves, nor any right, or property

in the labour of others, to pledge as a ſecurity for a temporary ſupply, they conſtitute a part of the ſociety of the poor, and there muſt remain, relying on the employers for their daily ſubſiſtence, until, by returning to their former occupations, they are again enabled to ſupport themſelves without ſuch aſſiſtance.

As the cauſes which render the ſociety of the employed liable to become members in the ſociety of the poor, can thus be diſtinctly traced, it ſhould ſeem the province of the employers (who are alone ſuppoſed to grant them relief in caſes of neceſſity) to be vigilant, that theſe cauſes be not multiplied: to uſe their utmoſt endeavours to remove them *in toto;* or to provide by the moſt charitable means againſt their baneful effects. The viſitations of Providence, in continual bodily infirmity, the imbecility of the mind, the feebleneſs of old age, or the incapacity of infant orphans—it is the lot of the afflicted ſubjects of them to bear; and it is the incumbent duty of the more favoured parts of ſociety, by kindneſs properly adminiſtered, to alleviate thoſe ſufferings, which they have no power to counteract. The other natural incapacity is by accident, or a temporary want of health; the former, human prudence is incompetent to prevent; the latter, with every moral conſideration that produces poverty, may, in a great

meaſure be counteracted. The want of employment may be adduced as a ſingle inſtance in ſupport of this aſſertion. Is it not a reproach to the common ſenſe of the employers? Is it to be reconciled by the laws of humanity, of ſocial order, or of individual ſelf-intereſt, to ſupport a man in idleneſs, which, according to the exiſting laws, muſt be done; and to allow the ſum of the productive labour he may poſſeſs to remain inert, and not to be called into action? This, on the part of the employers is voluntarily impoſing an heavy tax on themſelves, and robbing the ſtate of a certain portion of its national capital.

All who do, or ſhould labour, are in a proportionable degree liable to both conditions of poverty.

If one poſſeſſing an acre of garden-ground, require the labour of another beſides himſelf to cultivate it, he will be leſs expoſed to accidental, or temporary poverty, than his aſſiſtant; becauſe, it is preſumed, that the labour of every individual, is, or ought to be, equal to the wants of himſelf and family. This garden requiring the labour of two perſons, is therefore capable, and will inſure the poſſeſſor to a certain extent, againſt the ſecond deſcription of poverty, *i. e.* in the event of accident or ill health, a temporary ſuſpenſion of employment; or an unexpected increaſe in the price of food. Should accident, or ill health,

prevent his own exertion, ſtill does the labour of his aſſiſtant continue to ſupply him, with a return from his ſingle acre: if a ſuſpenſion of work take place, by froſt, or other cauſe, his expences are reduced by the diſcharge of his ſervant; and ſhould there be an unexpected increaſe in the price of food, his articles at market ſoon feel a proportionable advance. Thus it appears, that a man in the poſſeſſion of but one ſingle acre, is, to a certain extent, guarded againſt that temporary poverty, to which his aſſiſtant having none, muſt occaſionally ſubmit. A long continuance of ill health, or an unprecedented increaſe in the price of the neceſſary articles of life, will, however, after a time, reduce the induſtrious gardener to a ſimilar ſtate with that of his aſſiſtant.

Were the proprietor of the greateſt landed eſtate in this kingdom wholly dependent on the labour of one ſingle individual for his ſupport, he would be equally liable to poverty with the peaſantry in his fields: but, as his income is not derived out of one, but out of the labour of the many individuals, to whom his property is capable of giving employment, the probability of his becoming indigent, or ſubject to temporary poverty, is, when compared with the reſources of the gardener, very far removed. Yet is not his ſituation beyond the reach of poſſibility; to illuſ

trate which, let an epidemic diſorder be ſuppoſed to render incapable of work one-fourth of the inhabitants of Britain; and that the apprehenſion of the diſeaſe prevented the migration of ſtrangers to this country. He who poſſeſſed one thouſand acres, which gave conſtant employment to fifty perſons, muſt be content to live upon his ſhare, out of the productive labour of the reduced number 37 $\frac{1}{2}$; ſhould the calamity increaſe, and the number of his labourers be further diminiſhed to twenty-five, one-half or more of the ſuperfluities and indulgencies which hitherto he had enjoyment, prudence would direct, ſhould now be diſpenſed with; and, if the ſame argument be puſhed to its full extent, the circumſtances of the poſſeſſor of the thouſand acres, would, comparatively ſpeaking, be found equally uncomfortable with the peaſantry on his eſtate; at leaſt ſo far as relates to his ſubſiſtence derivable from his real property. The like ſtatement will alſo apply to all the members of the ſame ſociety, poſſeſſing perſonal eſtates; let their incomes accrue from any one, or more of the various perſonal properties exiſting in the community. But as the ſpecific quality of ſ.ch eſtates, ſo far as it reſpects the employed, is greatly compounded, the exemplification hath been drawn from one, the ſimplicity of which will inſtantly produce conviction. It muſt how-

ever be acknowledged, that the proſpects of the two ſocieties on ſuch occaſions, are widely different. The gentleman may with confidence anticipate the reſtoration of health, and the huſbandman's reſuming his accuſtomed labours on the ſoil; and, regarding the preſent viſitation as an inconveniency of but ſhort duration, may, in the event of his not having reſerved his own ſurplus income, in times of proſperity, apply to the more provident members in his ſociety for a temporary ſupply of theirs, which, at ſome future ſtated period, he will engage to repay. The ſecurity that is pledged for the performance of this contract, is called a mortgage on his eſtate; but, if it be traced to its primitive ſource, it will be found a mortgage on the proprietor's reſerved ſhare, out of the productive labour employed on his property.

It may probably be urged, that this poſition is ſtrained beyond all chance of ſuch a reſult, and that it is ſcarcely within the bounds of poſſibility that ſuch a reduction in a gentleman's annual rental ſhould take place.

Be it granted, that as no ſuch calamity hath ever reduced the owner of one thouſand acres to ſuch a ſtate of indigence, the poſſibility of ſuch an occurrence is unfair to aſſume in ſupport of an argument! This will not, however, militate againſt the principle meant to be eſtabliſhed;

" That it is to the want of this power, to which the employers can reſort in caſes of accident, or in times of need, that a great ſhare of the miſery of the employed is, at preſent, to be referred." This is one of the baneful diſeaſes to which a remedy muſt ultimately be applied.

It is not of the ſmalleſt conſequence, whether the ſquire be rendered incapable of maintaining his former ſplendor, by the interpoſition of the hand of divine Providence, in afflicting the country with ſickneſs, in denying it the regular return of ſeaſons, or by any other viſitation, with which, from the plenitude of his mercy, the inhabitants of this favoured iſle are ſeldom chaſtiſed; or, that he become ſo from cauſes of a nature totally different, ariſing out of the misfortunes of others, or, as they too frequently do, out of negligence, prodigality, or exceſs in himſelf.

Be the cauſe what it may, the effect is unqueſtionably the ſame; and the conſequence muſt ſtill be inſiſted upon; that had not this poſſeſſor of one thouſand acres of land, held from his anceſtors a contract for a reſerved portion out of the individual labour of the fifty perſons employed on his eſtate, which he could take to market, and depoſit as a ſecurity for the repayment of the loan he is obliged to ſo-

licit; he muſt, of neceſſity, being deſtitute of the means of ſupport, have become an immediate member in the ſociety of the poor. To this ſeaſonable relief, which is evidently a ſpecies of mendicity, the employed, unfortunately for them, have had no means, no power of reſorting.

It is, undeniably, the employer's ſtock of ſurplus property (*i.e.* ſo much as may be over and above their wants) being of a quality capable of preſervation, without injury or diminution, and transferable in the ſociety from one member to another, that hath alone been the peculiar agency which hath protected the ſociety againſt poverty.

This capital had its commencement on the firſt diviſion of the community, and hath been gradually encreaſing ever ſince. It is in conſtant circulation within the ſociety to which it belongs; yet one member never parts with the poſſeſſion of any part of it to another, without receiving in lieu thereof, either a valuable conſideration in exchange, or an obligation from him who receives, to return it again in a given time to the former owner, under certain conditions and ſevere penalties. Now as the ſociety of the employed hath no valuables to exchange, and as pecuniary penalties on a borrower who poſſeſſes nothing capable of being transferred, cannot be any ſecurity for repayment to a lender, it is ob-

vious, that no part of this floating capital can ever deſcend to, or be poſſeſſed by the ſociety of the employed.

Hence it is, that although the latter ſociety may individually poſſeſs a property, the aggregate of which may be equally valuable in ſtate arithmetic, to the joint ſtock of the former, yet, being of a quality which hath hitherto forbid either the collecting of its ſurplus into a fund, or of rendering it, when ſo collected, transferable, that the members of this ſociety, on any emergency, are reduced to poverty. On politically regarding, and comparing the property of the two ſocieties, it hath been ſtated, that the capital of the employed is ſaid to be equal to that of the employers. This, however, is not to be received with undefined latitude, being meant to extend to the value of the means alone, in the hands of the employers, compared with the value of the labour in the ſociety of the employed, and not to the treaſures of ſurplus property, that for ages have been accumulating, and have deſcended to ſucceeding generations.

As the employed ſociety hath had no power of preſerving its ſurplus property of productive labour, it is impoſſible that any ſtock ſhould have exiſted, to deſcend from its progenitors, like the real or perſonal eſtates of the former. Had not this been the caſe, the capital of the

one ſociety would as effectually have guarded its members againſt poverty, as it hath been known, time immemorial, to have protected the other.

If it be ſatisfactorily proved, that the ſurplus property of the employer (being capable of preſervation, and of being transfered, from him who can ſpare it, to him who may want it) hath, time immemorial, guarded that ſociety againſt the calamity of poverty; and, if it be as clearly exemplified, that the ſurplus property of the employed (having hitherto been diſregarded, and conſidered as incapable of ſuch important ends) hath, during the ſame period, been the operating cauſe which hath ſubjected its members to poverty—the origin of the evil is explored, and it remains only to diſcover the moſt ſalutary means for the cure of its malignant effects.

Like the great philoſopher, on diſcovering the ſum of the ſquares of the baſe and perpendicular, to be equal to the ſquare of the other triangular line, might the philanthropiſt on this occaſion exclaim, " I have found it! I have found it! " I have found that the exiſtence of that abun- " dant accumulation of miſery, which preſſes ſo " heavily upon one claſs of my fellow-citizens, " is capable of being removed by the liberality " and ability of the other! My apprehenſions, " leſt a phyſical impoſſibility ſhould have oc-

" curred, and rendered all endeavours fruitleſs,
" are happily fled; and never, until this great,
" this godlike purpoſe ſhall be effected, will I
" ceaſe to labour in this glorious cauſe of huma-
" nity."

Before any meaſure, whatever, can be propoſed to exterminate, or in future prevent the re-production of POVERTY, it becomes neceſſary, patiently, and more particularly, to examine the nature of its certain antidote, PROPERTY.

To perform this enquiry in a way beſt calculated to produce conviction, and to ſatisfy the mind with the leaſt poſſible trouble, as to the rectitude of the concluſions which may be drawn from the premiſes, a minute examination is altogether unavoidable.

In a political ſenſe it is granted, and here of courſe it will alſo be aſſumed, that EVERY INDIVIDUAL COMPOSING CIVIL SOCIETY, UNLESS PRECLUDED BY PHYSICAL INCAPACITY, POSSESSES PROPERTY.

The queſtion then at iſſue is, What is the peculiar nature, or quality of property? That in the poſſeſſion of one diviſion of the community conſtitutes riches, but which, in the other, is unequal to the protection of its poſſeſſers againſt poverty!

That property can ultimately be reſolved into no principle but labour, will not be denied.

Hence its nature muſt be immutable, notwithſtanding the various modifications it may be made to undergo, or the numerous ſhapes in civil life it may uſually aſſume. Neither the common, nor the ſtatute law, recognize this aſſertion. On any exchange of property, whether of real for perſonal eſtates, or of barter of one ſort of merchandize for another, in the language of the law, the nature of the property is ſaid to be changed; ſhould it not rather, on philological examination, be expreſſed, that the quality, or condition of the property by ſuch tranſaction is changed. For if all ſorts of property, when duly analized, and reſolved into their firſt principle, be found alike, to be labour, no ſubſequent uſe, or application, can poſſibly change their nature. If then it be the nature of all ſorts of property to remain unchanged, and to be equally appropriate in the poſſeſſion of the prince, or the peaſant, it is evidently not owing to any peculiarity inherently reſiding therein, that the latter, though in poſſeſſion of it, ſhould alone become obnoxious to poverty.

This expoſure to diſtreſs can then originate alone in the quantity of property poſſeſſed being unequal to the peaſant's neceſſities, or elſe in its quality, and the conditions under which he poſſeſſes it; *e.g.* The peaſant hath a wife and three children, his occupation that of a ſhepherd;

the increaſed price of food renders the value of his property, *i.e.* his ability, unequal to the demand of himſelf and family. His perſonal attendance on his flock, and the application of his ability, *i.e.* his care and judgment, conſtitute its quality; and the condition under which alone he can be benefited by, or enjoy his property, is continual exertion. The moment that exertion ceaſes, as it cannot be transferred, or delegated to another, that inſtant all the benefit of his property therein is completely extinguiſhed.

On this view of the ſubject, three important conſiderations ariſe, which require further examination, before they can with propriety be admitted as evidence, in the depending cauſe between the peaſant and the prince; or made to apply generally to the reſpective ſocieties in which each of theſe individuals is claſſed.

1ſt.—The quantity or value of the property belonging to the ſociety of the employed, is occaſionally, or perhaps always, unequal to the wants of its ſeveral members.

2dly.—The quality of the property conſiſting of perſonal attendance, care and judgment, is not transferable; as ſuch, it can be of uſe, or value, to no one elſe; in the event of the former proprietor being rendered incapable of enjoying it, or of not uſing it himſelf. It is the quality of this property alſo, to be

appreciated by the buyer, and not by the ſeller.

3dly.—The condition under which the property is holden, is by induſtry; *i. e.* conſtant perſonal exertion: any value for which the member ceaſes to receive, on his perſonal exertion failing.

When theſe diſadvantages firſt preſented themſelves, they had the appearance of being incidental to the property of the ſhepherd alone; it becomes therefore an object of enquiry, to determine if they equally, or in a greater or leſs degree, attach upon the individual property of the whole ſociety.

That the concluſions may be of that general, as well as local nature, which the importance of this part of the inveſtigation demands, it is neceſſary that theſe conſiderations ſhould be ſeparately examined.

Under the firſt of theſe the members are prevented ſaving in their moſt proſperous days a ſufficiency to relieve them on any ſudden occaſion of diſtreſs. The old adage, that, "the "labourer is worthy of his hire," certainly means that whatever a man by his induſtry can earn, he is juſtly entitled to; and, that inſtead of the bare neceſſaries of life, if by exertion he obtain ſome few comforts, it redounds ſo much the more to his credit. This excellent maxim is certainly

founded on a benevolent ſentiment. When the great diviſion in the community firſt took place, and the employers withdrew themſelves as it were, from the immediately ſocial intercourſe of the employed; they ſtill regarded their brethren with an eye of the tendereſt compaſſion, and with univerſal concurrence adopted this generous principle as an axiom, by which their future conduct ſhould be governed, that, "the labourer ſhall be conſidered in his reward, as worthy of his hire." Like all other human inſtitutions, this has not eſcaped, unimpaired; yet the ſentiment as completely exiſts at this hour, as when it was originally conceived; but the exigencies of the ſtate, and other moral cauſes, have completely militated againſt its operation. For it is a truth incontrovertible; that the price of proviſions, and other articles of the firſt neceſſity in life, hath been gradually encreaſing during the laſt half century; whilſt the price of daily labour, during the ſame period, hath not felt ſuch a proportional advance, as to be adequate to the wants of the employed in the manufactures or commerce of the country.

2dly.—The quality of the property individually belonging to the ſociety of the employed, is, in the true ſenſe and meaning of the expreſſion, completely perſonal; for it is alone derivable from the corporal ſtrength, inge-

nuity and mental ability of man; held by him from his Creator, in a ſimple form, or in one that is compounded. Thus, the labourer depends upon his ſtrength. The mechanic unites his ingenuity with his ſtrength. The profeſſor of the fine arts requires judgment, and all the other faculties of the mind, to aſſiſt his ſtrength and ingenuity. This property cannot *per ſe*, nor any part of it be transferred to another; and what is worſe, the individuals looſe it in toto, on being rendered incapable of exertion by any of the caſualties of life, to which by their occupation they become immediately expoſed. As the qualities of the mind are ſuperior to thoſe of the body, ſo the price of mental employment is higher than that of manual labour; the value of the ſervice is always eſtimated in proportion to the ſhare which the mind hath had in its production: whilſt the value of this property continues adequate to the wants of the individual; he is not immediately liable to poverty; and when it exceeds his wants, he endeavours to reſerve the ſurplus to protect him in future. But when the reverſe takes place, and the demand of his neceſſities cannot be ſatisfied by the produce of his exertions, after expending the laſt hardly

earned penny, he muſt, however reluctantly, become ſubject to poverty*. The property of a man of eſtates, of a manufacturer, of a merchant, &c. &c. is, and ever hath been, appreciated by the poſſeſſor; and he who wants it muſt pay the price demanded, or decline the purchaſe. But, in the other ſociety it hath a quality directly oppoſite, for the employers alone aſſume, and exerciſe the ſole right of determining on the value of the property purchaſed of the employed.

3dly.—No one, but from neceſſity, who could live equally well and ſupport his family without work, would ſubmit to labour. Hence it will be admitted, that as labour is indiſpenſable in ſociety to create property, property muſt therefore be the legitimate offspring of neceſſity. Manual labour, ingenuity, care, and judgment, which comprize the property of the employed, can only be exerciſed to

* A very active, intelligent, and conſiderate magiſtrate in Berkſhire, propoſed in the courſe of the laſt winter, that the induſtrious poor ſhould have their immediate neceſſities ſupplied, by lending them ſmall ſums, which were to be repayable by inſtalments, and for which, as it were, a mortgage was propoſed on the cottage-cow, or any valuable moveable they might poſſeſs. This judicious meaſure he was unable to get generally adopted; yet, in the few inſtances where the trial was made, he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing it attended with the deſired ſucceſs.

effect by the individual poſſeſſors, and are incapable of being delegated or aſſigned, ſo as to be operated upon by another, for the benefit of each. The tenure by which theſe individuals hold their property, is of a nature ſo extremely limited, that even diſinclination, a temporary incapacity, or any ſuſpenſion in the exerciſe of their daily labour, ſo long as it continue, and as it immediately relate to their property, is comparatively equal to death. For actual death alone can rob the employers of their property. The conditions under which this property is holden, may certainly appear very oppreſſive; but as on examination this oppreſſion will be found to have an origin more in the incompetency of the quantity, and want of legal protection, than in the tenure, the melioration of the condition will be effected in providing for the firſt ſtated inconvenience. A very great diſadvantage alſo attaches upon the ſociety of the employed, which is not always taken into conſideration. In adverting to the wages of the labouring man, it is the common language to ſtate that he earns 1*s.* 6*d.* or, as the caſe may be, *per* day; the mind immediately places his daily wants againſt his daily earnings, and may perhaps too eaſily be-

become ſatisfied, that the daily labourer is tolerably well off; forgetting that out of 1 *s.* 6 *d.* *per* day the year round, which would be 27 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.* one-ſeventh of this amount is to be deducted from his income for the ſabbath of every week, leaving him only 24 *l.* 15 *s.* 6 *d.* for the yearly ſubſiſtence of himſelf and family. The careful and induſtrious labourer feels very ſenſibly, that whilſt the property of others ſhould be ſubject to no abatement, in conſequence of the day ſet apart for divine ſervice, and thankſgiving to his benevolent Creator; that his property during the continuance of that day ſhould be totally extinct; and regarding himſelf as leſs endowed with bleſſings than his employer, may poſſibly conſider himſelf unequally treated, in being obliged to forfeit ſo large a proportion of his yearly income for the obſervance of this appointed day, which apparently coſts his employer nothing. To make up for this unavoidable deduction, himſelf, his wife, and children, will repair to the fields, and with extraordinary exertions endeavour to regain this ſeventh part of his income, which reduction the ſabbath alone occaſions to the daily labourer.

Hence, it is manifeſtly evident, that unleſs a man's daily labour exceed his daily wants, for

every day he is unemployed, he muſt reſort to pariſh aſſiſtance. As he loſes the return of his property every ſeventh day, himſelf and family would be deſtitute one-ſeventh of every year, were he not to endeavour, by, perhaps, unnatural exertions, to make up this deficiency. To accompliſh this deſirable end, no pains will be ſpared, or opportunity diſregarded, to prevent the painful neceſſity, of his applying to the publick purſe of his pariſh. From this he will even abſtain, until the wants of his family preſs ſo hard upon him, that he can no longer withſtand their entreaties. With the greateſt reluctance, and with a ſort of ſhame, that doth honour to his feelings, he will, when ſo compelled, make application. As if conſcious of having brought the calamity of poverty upon himſelf and family, by his own profligacy or want of prudence, he ſeldom can be ſatisfied that he *ought* to appeal; and he certainly never doth ſo, but he feels himſelf degraded. The moſt worthleſs fellow in the neighbourhood, and himſelf, on this occaſion, meet, in his idea, for the firſt time on equal terms. "Is it not hard, he will ſay, that after "all my toil and wearieſome hours ſtolen from "reſt; after being obliged to ſell my cow, and "all my little comforts, I ſhould at laſt be re-"duced to the ſame abject ſtate with this man, "who hath deſervedly been long an outcaſt of

"our ſociety." How forcible, how juſt is this complaint? and how cruelly circumſtanced is the condition of this large, this valuable part of the community? Its intereſts are neglected, and its property is denied that protection which the law ſo vigilantly beſtows on the other.

The very moment an aſſeſſment is agreed to by the occupiers, and the rate is allowed by two magiſtrates, that inſtant all their property, in its amount, ceaſes; it belongeth not to the inhabitants who may be aſſeſſed, or to the overſeer who may collect or diſtribute it, but to the poor alone, for whoſe ſole uſe and benefit it was ſpecially levyed and gathered.

Inſtead of obliging the induſtrious cottager to ſell his cow before he ſhould be entitled to any part of this collection, the aſſiſtance of his pariſh would, undoubtedly, be prudently and wiſely directed, to the enabling him to keep it. It was alone his poſſeſſion of this cow, that on former occaſions of emergency, prevented ſuch application. Youth, health, great exertion, and great care, procured this comfort to himſelf; this treaſure to his pariſh. Should a preſſing occaſion, though perhaps but of ſhort duration, cruelly oblige him to diſpoſe of his family's beſt friend, for the purpoſe of living upon the money which ſuch a ſale may produce, it will take many, many years,

if ever again, his ſtrength, induſtry, and frugality, will obtain him a ſufficiency to purchaſe another. How inconſiſtent then muſt be the conduct of the overſeers? how blind to their own intereſt? how benumbed to the common feelings of humanity, who inſiſt on their poor induſtrious pariſhioners diſpoſing of all their little hardly earned property, ere they will afford them the leaſt help; by this improvident meaſure they render thoſe abject, and probably burthenſome for ever after, who, by timely relief, would otherways have continued to live as before, independently of pariſh ſupport.

To the poor man's want of legal protection, under ſuch circumſtances, a very conſiderable ſhare of the preſent diſtreſs, is, unqueſtionably to be attributed.

Were the preſent appeal made to the paſſions, inſtead of the common ſenſe of the country, many, very many, ſuch reflections might be introduced. The operation of the exiſting laws furniſh ſuch objects at every corner. Under the general impreſſion of their benevolence, and, that in this country every one hath an home, where none can ſtarve, even the moſt charitably diſpoſed will paſs them by, regardleſs of their afflictions, or the difficulties that may attend their obtaining legal aſſiſtance. But to return; un-

doubtedly, neceſſity begat ſociety and labour—labour alone conſtituted property, and property *ultimately* produced poverty.

The human mind is not capable of ſuppoſing a country, with a climate ſo propitious to the wants of man in ſociety, to provide him, as it were ſpontaneouſly, with food, raiment, and ſhelter, without his exertions being required to ſupply, to continue, and to preſerve theſe neceſſaries.

On the firſt introduction of labour, it was ſoon found, that, by combining the powers of ſeveral men together, their operations were not only performed in a leſs proportion of time, but were executed in a more durable and convenient manner. This made the cultivation of that ſociety, which was formed in a ſavage, wild, or hunting ſtate, for protection only, infinitely more important in a ſtate of civilization.

A certain portion of the community, by extraordinary exertions, frugality, and care, ſoon acquired a greater quantity of food than they individually had occaſion for; but as food was ſubject to decay, it was bartered for cattle and convenient moveables of a more permanent nature. This was the firſt creation of transferable property. By a ſtrict conformity to the rules of their former conduct, theſe induſtrious poſſeſſors kept encreaſing their property with the return of

ſeaſons, by which means this meritorious diviſion of the then ſociety was enabled to extend their cultivation. As occupancy alone, at that time, was neceſſary to ſecure a title to a landed eſtate, for a valuable conſideration in ſervices, a part of the ſurface which had been fertilized, by the ſuperior ability and endeavours of this claſs, was lent, or let, to neighbours of the other diviſion. This conceſſion, though not the cauſe of poverty, certainly produced it, and all the evils which ſince have attended that degraded condition.

Although the previous enquiry hath diſcovered the inciting power, by which the greater proportion of poverty is commonly generated, to be completely of moral production, yet it cannot be denied, that the cauſe of it is as completely of a phyſical origin, ariſing from the inequality of the powers with which the great Omnipotent hath thought proper to endow his creatures.

Should any doubt ariſe in the opinion of thoſe who are ſtill advocates for the Utopian ſyſtem of unlimited equality, they may find ſome reaſon to ſuſpect the ground-work of their theory, by patiently following up the ability of one diviſion of ſociety in the earlieſt periods, and diſpaſſionately comparing it with the want of the like ability in that of the other.

Let it be ſuppoſed that an acre which had been improved by the labour of the former claſs, be lent or let, as before obſerved, for a valuable conſideration in ſervices during a certain term, which ſeldom in thoſe days exceeded a year, to one in the latter, who conſiders his purpoſe better anſwered in diſpoſing of his labour upon the property of another, becauſe it is partially cultivated, and more ready to his hand. This he prefers to challenging the foreſt yet uncleared: It may reaſonably be preſumed, that he who knew preciſely the quantity of labour expended on the ſpot in queſtion, would not part with it to another, with a view to extend his own cultivation, without exacting, in the ſervice contracted for, ſome additional labour. This, he would feel himſelf juſtly entitled to, as a recompence for his former toil, and to which, for his convenience, the other will not heſitate to conſent.

So much of the labour of the borrower, or tenant, as he can reſerve to himſelf, muſt daily be applied to the cultivation of another's acre. At the end of his term, others of diſpoſitions equally undeſiring and inactive, become candidates for the field in his poſſeſſion; this raiſes its value, and conſequently increaſes the demand of the proprietors in the future ſervices which

muſt be paid for its uſe. In proportion as the tenant is now longer employed for the landlord, the requiſite time his acre demands to ſecure a crop muſt be taken out of his reſt, or his exertions, when employed, muſt be unnaturally great. Arrived at a period when the encreaſed demand of his landlord leaves him but little time; or premature old age, the effect of exceſſive exertion, affords him but little ſtrength; he will, with all poſſible induſtry, ſeek in vain the produce of former years: himſelf and family muſt be content, in a certain degree, to be abridged of their little comforts: at length fatigue or caſualty depriving him of health, the expected ſubſiſtence from his acre fails, and he and his family muſt droop, ſtarve, and die, unleſs the benevolence of his landlord, and employer, to whom alone he can look up for aſſiſtance, prevent, by his timely relief the fatal cataſtrophe. The acre will now revert to the former poſſeſſor, in a higher ſtate of cultivation than when he granted it to the other, who, it may reaſonably be expected will ſcarcely be enabled to reſume his former occupancy on the encreaſed terms that will now be demanded.

It may poſſibly be urged, that the caſe now ſtated is unfairly adduced in ſupport of the argument, as being an inſtance of poverty reſulting from extortion and oppreſſion, and not from the

genuine operation of property, acting in concurrence with the diſpenſations of divine providence to man.

An example, it muſt be granted, might readily have been imagined, which would not have been liable to ſuch objection; but as the duty of this enquiry is to conſider man as he is, and not as he ought to be; that caſe which will generally be allowed to be moſt natural, has been regarded as moſt proper for the occaſion.

By the ſubſequent diviſion of the community into three claſſes, the inveſtigation ſerves to determine, why the higher order of ſociety hath been effectually guarded againſt; and the intermediate claſs but occaſionally ſubjected to poverty, whilſt the lower order of the people, time immemorial, hath been permanently wretched under theſe circumſtances.

The nature of poverty and of property hath alſo been defined, whence the following inferences.

That poverty is of phyſical origin. That here are two ſorts of poverty; permanent, and emporary; that all who labour, are in a greater, r leſs degree, by a ſuſpenſion of their work, iable to the latter; thoſe alone naturally incacitated, ſubject to the former. That on the erſonal efforts of the labourer ceaſing, he is reuced to poverty. That labour is property. That

every individual, not incapable of labour, poſſeſſes property. That property is extinguiſhed on incapacity to perform labour. That property is divided between the employers, and the employed. That the employers hold the means of exciting labour; and the employed the ability of producing it. That the nature of property is immutable, and is preciſely the ſame in the poſſeſſion of either ſociety; that although the nature of property is not to be changed, yet it differs in quality, agreeably to the circumſtances under which it is poſſeſſed. That it is the quality of property in the ſociety of the employers, not to require their own manual or mental exertion; to be preſervable without diminution, and tranſferable without difficulty. That by this quality the ſociety hath been enabled by little and little to amaſs great funds of ſurplus property; theſe have accumulated and deſcended to ſucceſſors, and have been the means by which alone the members have been protected againſt poverty. That it is the quality of property in the other ſociety to be entirely dependant on their own perſonal efforts, which can neither be preſerved, nor transferred. That it is appreciated by the purchaſer, and not the diſpoſer. That the ſociety of the employed, time out of mind, hath not received full compenſation for their property; *i. e.* the price of their labour hath no

been equal to the demand of their wants. That conſequently it hath been impoſſible for the members to have obtained any ſurplus property —and that it is SURPLUS PROPERTY alone that ſecures individuals againſt POVERTY.

The deciſion of the queſtion being ultimately obtained; it is evident, that if the want of ſurplus property ſubject the individual to poverty; poverty will increaſe in the ſame *ratio* as property decreaſes; *i. e.* in proportion as the price of the labour is unequal to the wants. And as this hath been an evil, which, though gradually, hath grown beyond expectation; and continues to proceed to a threatening magnitude, the ſooner meaſures ſhall be adopted for its removal, the more eaſily will the taſk be accompliſhed.

The ſmall proportion of the community who are alone naturally poor, from phyſical incapacity, the undeniable original cauſe of poverty, would, without much inconvenience, have been relieved, and made as comfortable as their lowly conditions would have admitted, had they not been included in the great bulk of the ſociety, whoſe poverty is occaſioned by moral cauſes. The diſcovery and the eſtabliſhment of this important fact, have, however, removed the greateſt obſtacle which ſtood in the way of general relief;

and the mind, encouraged by this gleam of ſucceſs, feels eager to ſurmount every other difficulty.

On the firſt declaration of the reſult, that ſurplus property can alone ſecure individuals from poverty, an immediate remedy appeared to lie in a very narrow compaſs. Encreaſe the value of the property of the employed, and poverty will no longer "ſtalk in the ſtreets." Undoubtedly to this meaſure the employers muſt ultimately reſort: but before it ſhall be finally concluded upon, it will require much thought to carry it properly into execution.

Were the wages of the employed raiſed in proportion to the value of their wants in this time of ſcarcity, it would be fixing a maximum on the neceſſaries of life, that no profuſion of plenty hereafter could aboliſh; and as the advance would inevitably be made in the moſt parſimonious manner, the ſociety could never, in future, hope for the enjoyment of a greater ſhare of comforts. However expedient, therefore, it may be, to relieve the preſſure of the preſent moment;* ſuch relief ſhould, and ought only to be of a temporary nature.

As the object of this examination is to diſcover the means by which hereafter relief may

* The price of wheat laſt market-day, in Mark-lane, was 120 ſhillings per quarter.

be effected and eſtabliſhed in a permanent manner, any reference to the exigency of the ſtate, or the preſent exorbitant price of proviſions, will ſtudiouſly be avoided.

It is not eaſy to conceive that ſo many writers on this ſubject, of the firſt rate talent and ability, ſhould have overlooked the particular circumſtance which ought moſt immediately to have claimed their attention; or, that on perceiving it, they ſhould ſo regardleſsly have paſſed it by as unimportant; *viz.* the CAUSE which produced, and was hourly producing, in this kingdom, an accumulation of poverty.

Had former legiſlators on being firſt convinced that the laws were ineffectual in protecting the little which was induſtriouſly obtained, and, that the value of the ſurplus-labour of the employed was incompetent to inſure the ſociety againſt poverty, had theſe paid due obedience to the great political maxims, acknowledged in all well-governed ſtates, that the price or value of each individual's ſtock of labour, or ingenuity, ſhould always be adequate to his own wants, and thoſe of his family, the portion of human miſery, which at this inſtant cries aloud for the immediate interpoſition of legiſlative authority, would not have exiſted; nor would the community have been called upon for ſuch extraordinary aids to relieve the general mendicity of the country.

Was it their having lived under a ſort of hereditary impreſſion, that controuled the mind, and made it implicitly depend on the wiſdom of their forefathers? Was it apathy that lulled the greateſt politicians England ever knew, into a confidence and belief, that the principle on which the poor's laws were founded, was correct; and, that the proviſions made for the ſupport of the indigent, were the beſt that human prudence or ingenuity could deviſe? Or, was the now inveterate diſeaſe, in an incipient ſtate, diſcovered long ago? Was it known, that inſtead of preventing poverty, the ſureſt means were enacted by law, to produce it? Certainly this fact hath been too long eſtabliſhed for a Coke, a Blackſtone, or a Mansfield, to be ſuppoſed ignorant of the reaſoning on which it is founded. Fearful, perhaps, of the conſequences which might reſult to the community, on a total abrogation of ſuch a voluminous maſs of parliamentary proceedings, and wanting leiſure to give a new ſyſtem that thought, which it would neceſſarily demand; theſe, and other great men, have choſen, on all occaſions, rather to temporize, and qualify the operations of the laws in exiſtence, than to conſtruct new ones on more humane and rational principles; always prefering a temporaneous mitigation of the effect, to a permanent removal of the cauſe. This injudicious ſpecies of legiſlating hath

been continued from time to time, by additional ſtatutes, as importunate circumſtances have demanded, until the laws, for the relief of the poor, are become nearly inexplicable, and a very conſiderable proportion of the rates annually collected for this ſpecific purpoſe is expended on litigations between one pariſh and another, or between the aſſeſſors and the aſſeſſed. Such proceedings, though much to be regreted, are the fatal and neceſſary conſequence of maintaining a principle radically defective. Nothing in the practice of ſocial duties can make that right, which, in its original conſtruction, is fundamentally wrong.

Whatever may have been the operating cauſe that ſo long hath prevented a ſalutary reviſion and correction of the poor's laws, is now of little avail. That they were intended to have anſwered wiſe and benevolent purpoſes, is indiſputable; but failing in the principle on which they were eſtabliſhed, the palliatives adminiſtered, have, after a time, uniformly irritated, inſtead of healing the wounds which the laws themſelves had been the means of inflicting. Theſe laws, by long experience, are confeſſedly proved not only incompetent to the humane deſign of their original inſtitution, but, on many occaſions, totally ſubverſive of the intereſts they were ordained to promote.

Wiſe men have ſaid, that " every moral evil, if

left alone, will ultimately cure itſelf." It will be a moſt joyful circumſtance for ſuffering humanity, if the preſent criſis ſhould in ſome way or other, put a period to this ſpecies of wretchedneſs. The general diſtreſs at this juncture favours the hope. Great evils, ſo long as they remain at a remote diſtance, are ever regarded through an inverted teleſcope; but when they approach the fire-ſide of every individual, "and puſh us from our ſeats;" their magnitude no longer can be denied; they muſt be oppoſed and vanquiſhed.

By deliberating on a queſtion, in which the whole community is more deeply concerned than curſory obſervation will proclaim, a circumſtance occurs, which, though no other meaſure for relief, ſhould be adopted, requires the immediate intervention of parliament. The hardly earned SHILLING of the daily labourer, ſhould, by due regulation, be made to produce TWELVE PENCE. Even under the preſent incorrect ſyſtem of relieving the poor, nothing would tend ſo much to give efficiency to the collections for their ſupport, as the inſtitution of PAROCHIAL SHOPS, where, on a reaſonable advance for trouble, riſk, carriage, waſte, &c. on retailing, the labouring man might obtain a ſupply of neceſſaries on equitable terms. A quantity of fuel, during the ſummer months, or, when cheapeſt to be had, ſhould alſo be procured and laid by

for the winter of the year. To this parochial warehouſe or repoſitory, the labourer at all times might reſort with a confidence of being ſupplied with good and wholeſome commodities on ſuch terms as would give his ſhilling a fair value with that of his employer.

In Northumberland, and ſome other of the northern counties, the daily labourer's ſhilling doth not in value ſuffer ſuch a reduction as in the more ſouthern parts of the iſland. There the wages being paid partly in kind, it may be eſtimated at *eleven pence*; here the induſtrious man whoſe daily earnings are ſeldom ſufficient for his daily wants, is fortunately circumſtanced if the ſhilling he hath laborioufly obtained, when converted into food or raiment at the retail ſhop in his village, will produce to his family what would not coſt his employer *nine pence half-penny!* Could the extremely inferior ſpecies, and often unwholeſome condition of the goods, vended at retail ſhops in the country, be as juſtly appreciated as their exorbitant profits can be aſcertained, the *labourer's ſhilling* would be found to ſuffer greater diminution. The want of funds, in the ſociety of the employed, precludes the advantages which the other ſociety derive by purchaſing at wholeſale rate; and the invariable cuſtom of paying wages at the concluſion of a week, precludes the like advantage of procuring

neceſſaries at market-price. In towns where a market-day weekly occurs, and in the ſurrounding country, regard ſhould ever be had to this circumſtance, and the week's wages, or a certain proportion of ſuch, ſhould always be paid the preceding evening, that the working man, in common with others, might avail himſelf both of the *choice*, and the *price* of the public market.

There are few greater diſregarded evils, than the general practice of paying wages on Saturday evenings. The Sunday mornings, except in very large towns, are unavoidably ſpent in reſorting to the retail ſhop of the village. Hard-by is the publick-houſe, where the inducements to idleneſs and unworthy proceedings, are greatly heightened by the leiſure which that day of reſt affords. Here, too frequently, the careful and ſober man, having no duty to perform but that, which, unfortunately, he is allowed to neglect, and with which he too eaſily diſpenſes; though contrary to the natural diſpoſition of his mind, is induced, by the allurements of company, to ſquander his earnings of the preceding week, whilſt his wife and children at home, are, with hunger and expectation, waiting the huſband's return with a ſupply of proviſion. This injudicious cuſtom deſerves great reprobation, when, in addition to the payment on Saturday evening, the publick-houſe is appointed for the receiving of wages. On

ſuch occaſions ſomething muſt always be ſpent "for the good of the houſe." Trifling as this ſum may be, yet, had that trifle been regularly funded, and carefully diſpoſed of, its future effects would have been very different to the conſequences produced by its preſent expenditure.

Did the arguments before deduced leave a doubt, that the price of the property of the employed (that is their labour) hath not been raiſed in proportion to the price of food; the rapid increaſe in the poor's rates alone, during the laſt fifty years, would furniſh an evidence that could not be impeached. It will, however, be expedient, that the relative ſituation of the employer, and the employed, be aſcertained, and the nature of the enormous ſupply, that one ſociety derives from the other, be fully examined, that in the event of a liberal augmentation being intended, a profuſe one may be avoided.

If it be aſked, What are poor's rates? and whence do they ariſe? On reference to the third volume of Burn's Juſtice, page 683, ample ſatisfaction may be derived, ſo far as relates to the exhortations and perſuaſions of the clergy and others, for gathering contributions in early times; and to the ſtatutes in modern ones, for impoſing a general aſſeſſment. Yet does the mind ſtill remain uninformed as to the nature of theſe rates,

and the origin of ſuch a peculiar and decidedly partial taxation.

If poor's rates are to be conſidered, ſimply, as an aid from the affluent for the relief of the indigent, then in proportion to each individual's affluence, ſhould be the ſubſcription. The very reverſe of which is generally the caſe: for inſtance—one who rents land to the amount of £.400 a year, will, at five ſhillings in the pound rack rent, pay £.100 *per* annum towards the maintenance of the poor; whilſt his landlord, with a real eſtate of £.2000 a year in the ſame pariſh, beſides his perſonal property, which is but ſeldom aſſeſſed, will not be rated ſo as to pay more than £.50. Greatly diſproportionate as this may appear at firſt, yet the inequality, in ſome inſtances, will, on further explanation, be ſomewhat abated. In this caſe the gentleman's income ariſes, as before ſtated, out of his reſerved ſhare of the productive labour expended on his eſtate; and what are now called poor's rates, are another proportion reſerved by his tenants, out of the daily earnings of each individual thereon employed.

If the landlord, in his payment of only £.50 at the time, when double that ſum was charged on the tenant, ſubſcribe his quota in due proportion to the number of perſons engaged in his employ, that ſum were fair and equitable.

The proportion out of the daily earnings of the ſociety of the employed, though, perhaps, not formally, was virtually ſurrendered to their employers, if not before, yet, certainly, at that period when power was firſt given to the juſtices to lay a general aſſeſſment. The preciſe terms of the compact, to which at that epoch both parties conſented, are not preſerved; nor can they, at this diſtance of time, be diſcovered; the conceſſion, however, muſt be preſumed to have been made, on condition, that the latter would ſolemnly engage to maintain and ſupport the former in all caſes of accidental or natural incapacity, want of employment, or general ſcarcity. To this property, ſo ſurrendered, it is the *duty* of the employed *immediately* to reſort, when under any ſuch circumſtances of inability or diſtreſs. The hiſtoric page of ancient times may not countenance this preſumption, though it will by the common ſenſe of the preſent age, be readily admitted. If a law paſs, obliging A. to ſupport B. when incapable of labour, whom before he only paid for labouring, little doubt can reaſonably be entertained, that the power which A. holds, will ſoon obtain from B. a reduction in wages, or further ſervices, (the ſame thing) as an indemnification for the future expence which the law eventually may have impoſed upon him A.

Theſe rates, with few exceptions, are payable by the occupier only; are due, and ought to be levied in proportion to the number of labourers employed. He who employs but one, ought to be reſponſible to the general fund, for the reſerved proportion only out of that one man's labour; whereas the employer of twenty ought to be accountable to the ſame fund, for the reſerved proportion out of the daily labour of that number. Hence a farmer, whoſe annual return may be ſtated at £.300 from a farm of £.100 a year, will pay on a crown-rate, rack-rent £.25, whilſt the ſhop-keeper, in the ſame village, whoſe return yearly ſhall be double that of the farmer's, will be charged only £.7: 10, becauſe the rent of his houſe and premiſes is only £.30 *per* annum.

To the amount of the return, or value of the profit obtained in any buſineſs, the poor's rate ought to have no reference, unleſs the number of perſons abſolutely employed to produce it can be aſcertained no other way.

When the law recommended an aſſeſſment to be made, the leaſt exceptionable way of laying it, was difficult to diſcover. Undoubtedly the moſt equitable mode would have been, that each individual ſhould be rated conformably to the number of perſons his occaſions might require him to employ. Many inconveniencies however would have ariſen. In manufacturing places, this would

have been abſolutely impracticable. It was in all probability, therefore, thought reaſonable to conſider, that in proportion to the property a man occupied, he would require the aſſiſtance of others. The rent furniſhed this ground for aſſeſſing, and was deemed the faireſt mode on which the tax could be computed and collected. Nevertheleſs, on being carried into effect, it was, and hath ever ſince been attended with injuſtice. The external commerce of the kingdom muſt be ſuppoſed at that time to have been very inſignificant, or it will be hard to reconcile the exemption of perſons living continually on board their ſhips at ſea, or in veſſels employed on the rivers and inland navigations. A ſhip or other veſſel is the maſter or owner's houſe, in which, by manual labour, his trade or traffic is carried on; and though no rent is ſpecifically paid for his habitation or warehouſe; yet, in equity ought ſuch tenements to be rated to the relief of the poor as well as the ſhop-keeper, and other inhabitants on ſhore, who pay rent for their dwellings. Equity, indeed, in ſuch caſes demands a greater contribution. The lives of this valuable tranſitory claſs of men ſo employed are greatly expoſed, and many yearly fall victims to their adventurous occupation, leaving their deſtitute families a heavy charge on the ſtationary inhabitants of the reſpective pariſhes to which they

belong. Conſiderable difference muſt be acknowledged to exiſt in the labour required on an arable, and on a paſture farm of equal rental; between two arable farms of £100 a year each, the one containing but one hundred, the other four hundred acres; between the manufacturer or mechanic, in the conſtant habit of employing one hundred perſons on premiſes rented at the ſame price, with an adjoining houſe in which another perſon lives independent of buſineſs. A tradeſman may be induced to pay in an advantageous publick ſituation, three times the rent for the ſame ſpace and accommodation he could have in one more retired; yet ought he not to contribute in that proportion to the rates in queſtion, unleſs the change of his reſidence demand his employing three times the number of aſſiſtants.

In proportion to the number of labourers employed by tradeſmen, mechanics, and others, in a village, where the rents of premiſes on which they work are unequal to the rent of ſo much land, in the ſame pariſh, as would require ſuch aſſiſtance for its cultivation; are ſuch employers benefited by the poor's rates, whilſt the chance of demand on that fund, is, by their occupations, greatly encreaſed. This effect is ſeverely felt by thoſe, who unconnected with its trade, reſide in manufacturing or ſea-port towns. If the rent of

a houſe be £. 50 a year in which one may privately live, and keep five ſervants; his annual aſſeſſment will equal that of the manufacturer in the ſame pariſh, who may conſtantly employ fifty, on premiſes of the ſame rental: this operates againſt the former individual two ways; firſt, in his being obliged to pay as much towards the relief of the poor, for employing five, as his neighbour does for fifty ſervants; and ſecondly, in his being made eventually ſubject to the ſupport of thoſe fifty, in caſe of accident or ill health, to which their vocations greatly expoſe them; to the reduction of their wages, or to their employer's ceaſing to have occaſion for their ſervices.

In ſea-port towns and places where the trade or buſineſs is chiefly dependent on manual exertion, poor's rates operate as a bounty on the commerce and manufactures carried on at the expence of the reſident inhabitants.—In rural œconomics, they are evidently a like bounty on agriculture at the expence of the poor man's labour.—An unjuſt tax upon induſtrious, ſmall occupiers; an unequal one upon independent large poſſeſſors; an inſignificant one upon the wealthy proprietors of the land; and no tax at all on a large claſs of people enjoying perſonal property, and on others who in equity ought to contribute their proportion.

Hence it appears, that the preſent method of raiſing the poor's rates is extremely partial, abundantly in favor of thoſe, who, under the ſmalleſt rentals, employ the greateſt number of perſons, and exceſſively oppreſſive on certain claſſes of the people only, whilſt the miſery of the indigent is by no means proportionably alleviated.

The exceſſively heavy demands on the ſociety of employers, and the increaſing number of ſupplicants, gave reaſonable ground of belief, that by providing for the poor in a body, within each pariſh, or, by uniting in diſtricts, two or more pariſhes for this purpoſe, agreeably to the act of the 9th of George the firſt, a material reduction in the rates would ſoon be diſcoverable. This received opinion gave riſe to the impolitic and ruinous inſtitution of workhouſes. The miſery theſe poor man's priſons inflict is not to be deſcribed; the debaſement the human mind here ſuffers is inconceivable! nor could a ſyſtem be deviſed at once ſo completely deſtructive of religion, morality, induſtry, integrity, and independency, as that which at preſent hath the recommendation of the law, and the ſanction, ſupport, and approbation of many reſpectable characters.

Regardleſs of every obligation but that of ſelf-intereſt, completely miſtaking the principle on which alone relief can be adminiſtered to effect; conſulting the comforts of the devoted individuals

neither here, nor hereafter, and blind to the conſequences attendant on ſuch a degradation of a free people to the ſtate; this unhallowed ſyſtem of petty tyranny, and uncontrouled oppreſſion, is incautiouſly purſued in the further extenſion and building of new baſtiles. The numbers of free-born ſubjects, guiltleſs of crime, or even miſbehaviour, are daily increaſing within theſe pernicious walls; here are they doomed to perpetual impriſonment, and to the capricious laſh of the contracting deſpot, who not only farms their maintenance at ſo much *per* head, like cattle, but inſiſts on a complete ſurrender of all property in their labour, whether of corporeal ſtrength, or mental faculty. To theſe baneful inſtitutions muſt the neceſſitated man, his wife, and children repair, and be immured or ſtarve. Here, ſoon will all family affection, all tender ſympathies be obliterated, the national character be extinguiſhed, and the father of a hardy race, become the parent of ſloth, and no longer the protector of his now puny, pilfering, ſubjugated family.

There are few places in England, where, to the honor of the court of Guardians, the comforts of the poor, immured in the workhouſes, are ſo diligently, ſo humanely attended to as in the City of Norwich; their proviſions are of the beſt quality, and their treatment is of the kindeſt

and moſt compaſſionate nature. Convinced of theſe circumſtances, the mind naturally ſuppoſes the general management to be ſuperior to the common practice in other places. This, moſt probably, on a due compariſon being made, would be found to be the caſe. Should the fact be thus eſtabliſhed, it would amount to a truth not to be controverted, that radical defects exiſted in the ſyſtem purſued, or the earnings of the people could not be ſo diſproportionate to the expences incurred.

The following is a general ſtatement of the annual receipts and diſburſements of the court of Guardians, in the City of Norwich, for ten years, from the 1ſt of May, 1783, to the 1ſt of April, 1792.

Years.	No. of perſons.	Maintenance and clothing. £.	s.	d.	Earnings. £.	s.	d.	Net expence. £.	s.	d.
1783	1301	11488	15	2	1215	8	7	10273	6	7
1784	1430	10718	19	6	1637	7	11	9080	11	7
1785	1612	11206	6	4	1424	18	3	9782	8	1
1786	1488	10378	13	4	1607	18	11	8770	14	5
1787	1490	10980	19	1	1595	9	7	9384	9	6
1788	1481	10579	16	2	1451	14	2	9128	2	0
1789	1473	10978	0	0	1584	8	5	9393	11	7
1790	1356	9834	2	1	1601	11	5	8232	10	8
1791	1141	8345	3	7	1539	13	3	6805	10	4
1792	1133	8533	4	5	1400	19	10	7133	4	7
	13905	103043	19	8	15059	10	4	87984	9	4
Average	1390	10304	7	11½	1505	19	0¼	8798	8	11
Per year		7	8	3	1	1	8	6	6	7
Per week		0	2	10	0	0	5	0	2	5
Per day rather more than.		0	0	4¼ not quite	0	0	0¼ rather more than	4		

By theſe extracts, the average earnings during ten years peace, do not appear to have amounted to three farthings *per* day, by each individual, independant of their clothing, which is chiefly manufactured by themſelves. The value of this employment, however, together with the number of helpleſs infants, and of the aged who are totally incapable of work, ſhould firſt be deducted, before ſuch an accurate account of the earnings of thoſe who were employed, can be exhibited, as will juſtify the concluſion, that no more than three farthings *per* day were obtained by each perſon, which ſeems to appear by the foregoing ſtatement. Let theſe deductions be imagined to any reaſonable extent, yet the diſproportion between the amount of the earnings, and that of the maintenance and clothing, will ſtill appear too great to warrant a belief, that the aſſeſſments collected are applied, though, perhaps, according to law, in the beſt poſſible manner to inſure the greateſt return from the employment of the ſturdy, and the greateſt œconomy in the maintenance and ſupport of the impotent poor.

It may be objected that poverty exiſted long before poor's rates were heard of; that originally the poor were under the care of the clergy, that a certain portion of the tythes were conſtantly applied to their neceſſities, and when this

was inſufficient, collections were made by the ſolicitations of holy men, from the purſes of the benevolent, having the power to beſtow. Be it ſo! on the evidence of hiſtory, whence the facts are collected, will they moſt cordially be admitted. This revenue, and theſe contributions, were certainly collected for this ſpecific purpoſe, and were appropriated, no doubt, to charitable uſes, yet, in no way do they invalidate or affect the origin herein ſtated of the preſent poor's rates. Theſe benefactions, for they were purely of a voluntary nature, were gathered, not for the temporary or accidental poor, which comprehends that diviſion of it now under conſideration; but for the other claſs of indigent perſons, the impotent mendicants, who, by the viſitation of divine Providence, or other melancholy cauſes, were deprived of their reaſon, of bodily ſtrength, or laboured under other afflictive circumſtances that precluded the exerciſe of manual or mental labour. Theſe are the unfortunate mortals, who, in the former part of the Enquiry, have been conſidered on the diviſion of the poor into two claſſes, as being permanently of the ſociety. For them alone were heard in former days the importunate ſolicitations of pious men; and the humanity of the preſent age teaches to hope they were attended with abundant ſucceſs.

Having, it is preſumed, ſatisfactorily diſpoſed

of this objection, it is essential, that the source whence the poor's rates originated should be more particularly examined.

That there was a time when labour protected against that description of poverty which hath been considered of moral production, is most certain. The first subscription for the general relief of it, though, perhaps, not formally acknowledged, did as certainly originate, out of the expropriated share of each individual's daily earnings, voluntarily surrendered by himself, and left in the hands of his employer, agreeably to the conditions of his contract for employment.

Rather than consider that the employers originally acted in an arbitrary or despotic manner, by witholding this certain portion of property from the employed, it will be charitable to suppose their reasons for so doing were from the best, the most benevolent motives. "If," say they, "we give these people the whole of what "they are entitled to, they may live up to the "utmost farthing of their incomes; may allow "themselves indulgencies which their occupa-"tions forbid, and their stations in life cannot "require. They will become enervated by in-"toxication, or incapable by disease, and we "shall be deprived of their assistance. Whilst "they are ill they will not earn any thing, and "as we cannot do without their services, we

" muſt be under the neceſſity of ſupporting " them whilſt they remain incapable of work, " out of our own pockets. Thus ſhall we be " paying for their labour twice over. To avoid " this diſadvantage, as we hold the means of " employment, and as they cannot exiſt without " it, let us come to a fair underſtanding, and " agree upon ſuch terms, as by each party may " be conſidered mutually beneficial."

In conſequence of this natural arrangement, which, though unrecorded in hiſtory, cannot but be admitted as very probable, and virtually to have taken place, a part of the value of the property of the employed was prudently and judiciouſly ſurrendered into the hands of the employers. A proportion of their daily earnings was by them regularly paid, and a proportion was reſerved. The concluſion of this contract was the beginning of ſorrow! The employer could eſtimate the amount which would ſuffice for the common ſupport of his labourer, and paid him no more. As ſociety increaſed, and as proviſions and other articles advanced in price, the employed would naturally appeal for the uſe of a greater proportion of their daily earnings. In reply to which, it is probable, they were told, that the part reſerved out of their labour was found inſufficient to anſwer the intended purpoſes; that the ſums that might even-

tually be requiſite for their accidental neceſſities were incalculable; and, that prudence directed that ſome proviſion, as an indemnification to themſelves, ſhould always be reſerved. As this proviſion was without limitation, and as the employed had no power to regulate or reſtrain it, they obſequiouſly ſubſcribed to the refuſal; or, if what they had to offer in juſtification of their demand, could not be over-ruled, the augmentation they obtained was of the moſt parſimonious nature, and contributed but little to their relief. On ſuch occaſions, it may be preſumed, the employers would not fail to remind the other ſociety of the heavy expence, in addition to their wages, to which they eventually had made themſelves liable. This might be ſtated, without danger of refutation, as greatly exceeding the reſerved property depoſited in their hands by the employed.

The fatal conſequences that have attended this contract between the two ſocieties, did not, however, ariſe from the conceſſion then made; for that was prudent on the part of the one, and political on that of the other; but in the very improvident manner in which it was determined, and finally concluded.

Whilſt men were in ſmall ſocieties they lived in continual intercourſe, and neighbourly regard for each other; the neceſſity of ſome regulation

became to both parties equally evident. As the employed were well acquainted with the rectitude, and liberality of their ſeveral employers, they did not heſitate to make an unconditional ſurrender of that portion of their property, which had been mutually adjuſted. They received in return no ſecurity to preſerve their intereſt in the ſurrender. In the knowledge they poſſeſſed of the honour and honeſty of their employers, they implicitly confided; and without the leaſt reſervation whatever, gave up, not only a very conſiderable proportion of their daily income, but the power alſo of having the leaſt controul over it ever after. This was the mortal blow to the comfort of themſelves, and their poſterity; the invincible barrier to their happineſs and proſperity; which neither time, nor all the legiſlative power of the empire hath yet been able to remove.

Nothing can be more natural than to conceive how this evil ſhould have originated, or more plain, than that the employers feeling the conſequence they had derived by this unconditional delegation of property, would not, after the uſage was once eſtabliſhed, eaſily relinquiſh the power it beſtowed.

It would require but few years to extinguiſh every idea, that the aids for the relief of the ſociety originated in its conceding a part of its

own daily labour, or to ſatisfy the humble minds of its members, that the collections for their ſupport, were gratuitouſly from the pockets of their employers, and the voluntary effect of ſocial benevolence.

Excluded by the terms of the contract, any ſhare in the adminiſtration, or any voice in the diſtribution of their reſerved funded labour, the means by which ſuch reſources were obtained would ſoon be conſidered an enquiry of little importance. They received what they were taught to believe was generouſly beſtowed, confeſſed their obligations, and were quiet. No ſooner, by politic addreſs, was this principle eſtabliſhed, than the legiſlature was called upon to abate thoſe wrongs which were naturally conſequent on the undue weight of power and authority with which the ſociety ſo incautiouſly had inveſted their employers. This gave birth to thoſe numerous exiſting laws, which, from time to time, have been intended for the adjuſtment of the various diſcordant opinions entertained by each party: whilſt the two important objects that alone called for redreſs, viz. affording to every honeſt induſtrious labourer, a *complete protection* in whatever ſurplus property his exertions might have procured, or his frugality might have ſpared, and reſtoring to the whole ſociety a due controul over their own reſerved capital, either

eſcaped the attention of the legiſlature, or if not, the reluctance with which the employers would part with ſo conſiderable a ſhare of their conſequence, rendered every effort of the other ſociety, for this purpoſe, ineffectual.

For the expreſs purpoſe of relieving and employing the poor, were former proviſions re-enacted by the ſtat. of 43 Eliz. It is greatly to be lamented that on this occaſion the law did not ſhew as benevolent a regard towards the induſtrious poor, in ſecuring to them whatever ſurplus property their extraordinary exertions might procure them, as it did to provide them with employment.

Had proviſion for ſo eſſential a purpoſe been made, many of the melancholy conſequences which have attended this, and the ſubſequent laws, would not have been experienced. In Scotland, where the inhabitants, generally ſpeaking, are certainly not more opulent, and where the earnings of the employed are inferior to thoſe in England, the proportion of diſtreſs and poverty, is infinitely leſs, when the number of working people in the two countries are comparatively regarded. The mode of ſubſiſtence in North Britain may probably be thought ſufficient to account for this circumſtance. The great bulk of the employed in huſbandry, and other occupations in England, have, for many years, lived wholly upon wheaten bread. In Scotland

oatmeal is ſubſtituted, and with the ſame deſcription of perſons is their general food. But as the quantity of oatmeal for a day's ſubſiſtence much exceeds that of wheaten flour, the difference in the weekly expence of a family will not be found of that importance to juſtify the concluſion. In that country, neither the poor's laws, nor the poor's rates of England are known: collections are there made at the churches, and other places of divine worſhip, and ſubſcriptions are gathered from the charitably diſpoſed, for the permanently poor, who are alſo permitted publickly to receive alms from the benevolent. The number of beggars, however, in Scotland, bears no proportion to thoſe in England. It is a very rare circumſtance, if the metropolis and its vicinity be excepted, for one to aſk charity there who is not incapable of labour. The only reaſon why poverty hath leſs prevalence in North than in South Britain, is, that the extra earnings of the employed, are *there*, completely ſecured to the individual, whilſt the protection of ſuch extra earnings and the affording that ſociety a due control over ſuch reſerved capital *here*, either eſcaped the attention of the legiſlature, or it feared to eſpouſe the cauſe of juſtice in the ſociety of the employed, againſt the combined influence of the employers.

Although the property of labour *per ſe*, is of a quality incapable of being transferred, yet, as the produce of it when obtained is convertible, the ſurplus, or that portion more than neceſſary for the immediate wants of each member, would ultimately have been added to the joint ſtock of the ſociety. Not that the advantages of every extraordinary exertion, or hour of reſt dedicated to labour, would directly have been converted and returned into the common purſe; but inaſmuch as the honeſt, the noble pride of Engliſhmen, hath hitherto forbidden their applying for pariſh-relief on trifling occaſions of incapacity to work; ſo, in like manner, is it juſt to conclude, that the ſame manly ſpirit would have operated and precluded, in ſuch caſes, any demand on the ſociety. Thus would it imperceptibly have become rich; not a moment devoted to induſtry would have failed to contribute ſomething to the general fund; and the individuals would ſoon have become inſtructed, that thoſe were generally the beſt huſbands, and the beſt members of the ſociety, who had the leaſt occaſion to apply for its aſſiſtance. The employers are not only well aware of this circumſtance, but have ever availed themſelves of the accruing advantages. To him who barely lives on what he earns, they owe much; but to him who earns

more and ſaves that little which his wants demand not, they (the employers) are under great obligation.

The contract, as it at preſent exiſts, between the two ſocieties, appears virtually to ſtand thus. A. agrees to work ten hours each day for B. at 20*d. per* day; B. conſents to employ A. on condition that A. will be content to receive 18*d. per* day for his ſubſiſtence, and to allow the other two-pence to remain in B's hands, as an indemnification to him B. for his taking upon himſelf the ſupport of A. and his family, in the event of A. being rendered incapable of labour, either by accident when young, or by infirmity when old. Now it is plain, if no accident or interruption of labour happen to A. whilſt young, and that himſelf and family either die, before he become incapable by age or infirmity; or, that living to be infirm, yet having been lucky enough by great induſtry, and great care, to ſave a ſufficiency that prevents his application to B. for relief, that B. muſt be a great gainer by A's ſervices; inaſmuch as A. in this caſe will have made no demand upon B. for any part of the money in B's hands, ariſing from the two-pence *per* day, originally ſtipulated to be ſo reſerved by B. But admit that accident happen, and that A. be under the neceſſity of requiring ſuccour from B.; whatever be the ſurplus property,

with which the induſtry and care of A. may have provided him, it will all be expended before he will apply to B. for aſſiſtance. As ſuch, it is evident, that the ſavings, or ſurplus property of A. is his no longer than he can do without the application of it to his neceſſities. The very moment he becomes incapable of work, he hath a right to reſort to B. for ſubſiſtence; and to reſerve his own ſurplus property entire; but as the natural diſpoſition, and the education that A. hath received, teach him to diſdain aſking relief, whilſt he hath any of his own property left; ſo long as this may laſt is B. exonerated, and be its amount what it may, that ſum is a complete ſaving to B.

Hence it follows, that all thoſe members of the employed, who never apply for pariſh aſſiſtance, are contributory to the funds in the hands of the other ſociety; and thoſe, who by great exertion, care, and frugality, are enabled to "*ſave a penny againſt a rainy day*," largely ſubſcribe to the maintenance of thoſe who cannot. For, when they are no longer able to protect themſelves againſt poverty, by their rejecting until their little ſavings are exhauſted, that proportional return of their own ſubſcription, *which by contract they have an immediate right to demand, they poſitively ſurrender all their ſurplus property into the hands of their employers.*

What an extremely unfair advantage is commonly taken of this noble ſpirit of independency!

By great diligence and œconomy ſome few ſave a ſufficiency which enables them to buy and keep a cow; or even to purchaſe the cottage-roof under which they are ſheltered. The elevated ſentiments of moſt in this claſs have frequently induced them to diſpoſe firſt of their cow, and afterwards to endure the wintry blaſt beneath a neighbour's ſtack, rather than debaſe themſelves by ſupplicating pariſh-relief. In conſequence of theſe exalted notions in a few individuals, a cuſtom too generally hath been eſtabliſhed; (for it is to be hoped the law cannot countenance a uſage ſo barbarous) to deny any one relief whilſt he poſſeſs any transferable or convertible property. By what principle of juſtice or humanity, of common ſenſe, or ſound policy, can this be authorized? and how is it that under a government like that of England, ſuch cruel meaſures ſhould ſo long have been practiſed with impunity.

However incorrect this analyſis of the contract between the employers and the employed may at firſt appear; yet, reflection will ſoon reconcile, not only its ſeeming incongruities, but the conſequences which are ſtated to have ariſen from the unfairneſs of the agreement.

Had the ſociety, inſtead of relying with implicit confidence on the judgment, humanity, and

integrity of thoſe to whom they yielded ſo large a portion of their capital, inſiſted upon being inveſted with a power to ſuperintend and direct the application of it; a capital of ſurplus property, funded by themſelves, for their own particular uſe and benefit, and reſerved for the eſpecial purpoſe of reſorting to on all emergencies would have been formed, and conſtantly have been accumulating; which would effectually have preſerved the ſociety from the abject ſtate to which, time immemorial, it hath been cruelly expoſed.

Had a proper control been inſtituted at the time this conceſſion was made, and had good and wiſe regulations been ordained, and ſtrictly obſerved by the members, who under certain reſtrictions ſhould have had the care of the funded ſtock, and others, who under like conditions ſhould have had the appropriation of it, it is impoſſible at this hour to ſay, what might have been the accumulated property of the ſociety. This, however, is not important: ſuffice it, that the means would have anſwered the end. That the funds of the ſociety would have protected it againſt poverty.

The complete ſecurity which the ſociety would have had againſt the miſerable condition to which it hath been reduced, is not the only good that would have been derived by having kept its

common purſe within the limits of its own control and juriſdiction. Under a diſcreet management, the joint capital, as well as the individual ſtock of its members, would have aſſumed the like quality with that of their employers; the reverſe of which their property hath ever ſince poſſeſſed: the former would no longer have been at the mercy of the latter, not only to pleaſe to employ them, but to be pleaſed to pay them whatever in their judgment they might think equivalent to the others ſervices. On an increaſe in the price of proviſions, the employed would have ſtated that their commodity in the market ought to keep pace in price with thoſe they had occaſion to purchaſe of their employers. If ſuch additional value to their ſervices were denied, they would, with all frugality, have had recourſe to their funded property, until the employers, convinced of the juſtneſs of their appeal, ſubmitted to the demanded augmentation. The obligation between the two ſocieties being of a completely reciprocal nature, would always have found its level; and though ſhort interruptions to buſineſs might occaſionally have taken place, yet theſe inconveniencies would ſoon have ſubſided.

The alarming conſequences that might have ariſen from combinations in the ſociety of the employed, may be offered as an inſuperable

objection. Are alarming combinations made by every other claſs of people who have commodities to ſell? or are they apprehended? The labour of the ſociety is clearly its commodity; and the individuals have unqueſtionably a right to market price. Greatly may it be doubted, whether all the laws againſt combination, foreſtalling and regrating, are not of a very narrow, humble policy; and what is ſtill worſe, made perhaps to prevent the very evils which former ſtatutes have induced.

If the labourer on the preſent day demand ſuch wages in proportion to his wants, as his employer may think exorbitant, he is not engaged. What is the conſequence? not chooſing to work on the terms offered, and being in poſſeſſion of no ſurplus property, he applies for a ſubſiſtence to the overſeer, who, thinking himſelf alone entitled to put a value on the property of the other, denies him pariſh-aſſiſtance: the juſtice of the peace confirms the deſpotiſm of the overſeer, and the poor man, if he perſevere in his demand, is ſent to cloſe confinement, and hard labour, to ſubſiſt on bread and water in the houſe of correction!

Whence can ariſe this inconſiderate proceeding? is there any trade or traffic between man and man in civil ſociety that can countenance it? or can there be brought in extenuation of its

injuſtice, any ſimilar tranſaction? Hath the buyer in any other caſe whatever the power of affixing a price on the commodity of the ſeller? Certainly not. The unreaſonableneſs of the dealing can alone be ſanctioned by the authority that created it. The employer holds all the ſurplus property his labourer ever did, or can poſſeſs; and he, poor man, having no power to obtain any portion of it, for his preſent emergency, muſt in this caſe ſtarve, or go to priſon! dreadful alternative! for the crime of preſuming to withhold his property, becauſe the purchaſer will pay him that price only he may chooſe to think it worth!

If the employers pay not thoſe whom they employ, a ſufficient value for their labour, decently to ſupply themſelves and their families with the common neceſſaries of life; and ſomething more to provide them againſt the caſualties, "that fleſh is heir to." As they are compellable by the laws now in being, to ſupport them when rendered incapable of ſupporting themſelves; how much preferable were it, long ago, to have allowed the employed, under proper regulations at firſt, the means which, at laſt, muſt be yielded to them under ſuch circumſtances.

The very unfortunate diſtinctions, made by law, furniſh the employers immediately with a reaſon, which muſt in their juſtification be admitted. "I pay my labourer," ſaith one, "whilſt

he continue well, in my ſervice, becauſe I have his work; but it is the duty of the next pariſh to pay him when ill, becauſe the law ſays, he belongs to it."

Were it the object of this diſcuſſion to point out the numerous hardſhips, and the vaſt portion of miſery which particular enactments have inflicted, inſtances would readily occur; but as the preſent poor's laws have already been regarded as generally founded in error, and executed with injuſtice, adverting to the mercileſs operation of certain clauſes, would be irrelevant to the deſign, and inefficacious in producing the means by which a ſyſtem of relief may ſucceſsfully be carried into effect.

However erroneous or defective may be the principle of theſe ſpecific laws, yet the obloquy under which they have ſo long exiſted, may, in a great meaſure, be attributed to the improper conduct of thoſe who have been entruſted with the power of executing them. Hence it becomes neceſſary, that the law, as it now ſtands, ſhould be reſcued from that portion of diſrepute, which alone hath originated in the cruel neglect of its benevolent proviſions, or in a wanton execution of its exceptionable directions. The law in all caſes gives the power to act, but in no one can it preſcribe the manner how; this muſt neceſſarily be left to the humanity and diſcretion

of the acting officer. In proportion to the power given, and to the impunity with which that power may be exerciſed, does the natural tyranny of man operate. When property, and legal authority, are inordinately oppoſed to poverty and impotence, the latter muſt unavoidably ſubmit to the great diſproportion of power in the former; yet will not the laws countenance, but ſeverely chaſtiſe unfeeling, or improper conduct, in the exerciſe of any delegated authority. The indigency of the objects experiencing this hard treatment, hath, in moſt caſes, precluded appeal for redreſs. Acts of cruelty and injuſtice have been multiplied under this ſecurity, yet have they not all gone unpuniſhed. Inſtances are not wanting, in which the iron-hearted executors of the law, have for their miſconduct, been made publick examples. The kind interpoſition of a gentleman* in Northumberland, a few years ſince, in the cauſe of female ſufferings, is engraven on the hearts of his benevolent contemporaries, and will remain a never fading monument of his own humanity and juſtice on the records of that county.

It was clearly the object of the philanthropic propoſer† of the intended bill for regulating the wages of labourers, by the price of proviſions, to

* Bryan Burrell Eſq. Broom-Park, Northumberland.

† Samuel Whitbread, jun. Eſq.

impreſs the houſe of commons, in the moſt forcible manner, with the idea, that the great increaſe of the poor's rates, from £.600,000 to three millions *per* annum, was alone owing, and ſolely to be attributed, to the inadequacy of the price of labour, when compared to the price of proviſions. Unqueſtionably this argument was extremely well founded, ſo far as it extended; yet are there other circumſtances that have greatly concurred towards this accumulation. However in all other political reſpects the abundant increaſe of manufactories within theſe laſt few years, may juſtly be regarded; certain it is, that theſe eſtabliſhments, under the preſent mode of aſſeſſing the poor's rates, have contributed greatly to augment the evil. This operating circumſtance is yet but a trifle when compared to the injury done the common cauſe, in prohibiting the ſociety, for whoſe relief alone the funds were formed, having any intereſt whatever, either in the raiſing, or diſpoſing of them.

As it is indubitably right, firſt, to endeavour to make mankind happy, that they may become virtuous, ſo alſo is it requiſite to make them reſponſible, to inſure their being œconomical: this maxim may require ſome illuſtration.

In caſes where a certain premium is given, or a bounty annually granted by government to ſocieties, or individuals expenſively engaged in

deſigns of publick utility, would any thing be more prepoſterous, than, that the ſtate ſhould erect a board of control to ſuperintend and determine upon the application or expenditure of ſuch premiums, or bounties. Nothing would ſo completely militate againſt the intention of the grant, or be more entirely ſubverſive of the end propoſed. The ſum is paid over to the ingenious perſons, and it reſts with them to make the aids, afforded by their country, turn to the beſt poſſible account; it is the parties themſelves only that can adminiſter it to effect, and they alone are reſponſible for its fit appropriation. In like manner, when children are portioned off by their parents, it frequently happens, that the former at that inſtant, for the firſt time in their lives, become reſponſible for the expenditure of their incomes; and the latter ſeldom fail to conſider any future interference in their domeſtic œconomy as improper: the young people know on what funds they have to rely, and being alone intereſted in the comforts derivable from a judicious expenditure, and alone reſponſible for the inconveniencies which will inevitably attend a contrary ſyſtem, will prudently avoid the diſtreſs of the one, for the enjoyment of the other: ſo powerful an effect hath this reſponſibility on the mind, that when ſuch young perſons commence houſekeepers, and, as it were,

begin the world, under the immediate eye and direction of watchful affectionate parents, however kind may be the motives of the latter, the ſum of the happineſs of the former, will, on a certainty, be reduced in proportion as they are thus rendered leſs accountable for their own domeſtic arrangements. If then the want of this reſponſibility be found to act ſo powerfully againſt the intereſt and proſperity of large aſſociations, as well as againſt the tranquility of ſmall families, can a doubt remain as to its fatal influence on the extenſive ſociety of the employed.

Conſcious of the undue authority aſſumed over their revenues; ſeverely feeling the deſpotiſm under which they were adminiſtered, and perceiving that ſums, to a very large amount, were continually diverted out of the natural channel in which they were intended to flow; ſome few of the employed wiſely thought that an experiment ſhould be tried to regain, in a degree, that exemption from control, which the natural reciprocity between the employers and themſelves, entitled them to enjoy. This ſentiment gave riſe to the meritorious inſtitution of friendly ſocieties, at once the offſpring of freedom, and parent of independency. Had theſe virtuous aſſociations been cordially aſſiſted; had they been ſtrenuouſly protected by the ſociety of the employers, it were impoſſible they ſhould not

have flouriſhed generally all over Britain, inſtead of obſcurely vegetating, as they now do, in a few places. The evidently beneficial effects of theſe aſſociations cannot be denied, and the cauſe of their being, at this day, confined to a few inſtances only, after ſo many ſucceſsful experiments, favours the conjecture, that the employers have abated of their ſupport and encouragement, in proportion as they have diſcovered a diminution of that aſſumed power, which, for ſo many years, they have exerciſed over the other ſociety. In all probability theſe valuable communities would have drooped, and fallen into total decay, had not the exertions of a gentleman, high in office, with great perſonal fatigue, obtained, to his immortal honor, the act of the 33rd year of his preſent Majeſty's reign, which placed them under the protection of the legiſlature. Since this period, ſeveral new aſſociations have been formed; yet, are they by no means ſo univerſal as the excellency of the principle on which they are founded might give reaſon to expect. Inſtances are but rare, in which the employers cheerfully contribute to their formation, whilſt the difficulties they ſtruggle with, in conſequence of the diſcountenance from that ſociety, have much retarded the proſperity of thoſe already conſtituted, and prevented, on

many occaſions, the inſtitution of others. Many overſeers of the poor, unwiſely conſidering that every farthing of ſurplus property ſhould firſt be exhauſted by the labouring individual, before he or ſhe ought to be entitled to relief, are particularly watchful to aſcertain thoſe of their pariſhioners, who are members of theſe aſſociations, to whom it is then, their too general practice (however unjuſtifiable) to deny pariſh aſſiſtance; and, that not only to the huſband, but to his wife and children, ſo long as he continue an aſſociated member. On this account many have declined engaging in theſe excellent fraternities, and others have been obliged to withdraw themſelves from theſe friendly ſocieties, in order that their families might avail themſelves of the unfriendly relief of their reſpective pariſhes.

Theſe circumſtances, no leſs impolitic than inhuman, have, undoubtedly, operated much againſt their extenſion and increaſe in point of number, though not againſt their principle, for that is founded on the broad baſis of ſocial combination, in which every individual undertakes to ſubſcribe his proportion of ability towards the protection of the community in times of danger, and a proportion of his property towards the maintenance of it in times of need or ſcarcity; in both caſes hath each member a natural inherent

right to judge of the means beſt ſuited to the former, and to control the management and appropriation of the latter.

The nature of property having being fully diſcuſſed; the cauſe and production of poverty, having been explained; each traced to its primitive ſource, and the great portion of the exiſting evil, found to ariſe, and have its being alone in moral cauſes, it remains to proceed to the other diviſion of the enquiry, viz. The means beſt calculated for rendering the ſocieties of the *employed* and the *poor*, leſs uncomfortable.

A time did certainly exiſt, when the labour of the individual endowed him with ſufficient ſurplus property to protect him on all common occaſions againſt poverty.

To the general deficiency of this ſurplus property, and to the want of legal protection in the few inſtances where it may exiſt in the ſociety of the employed, is indubitably to be aſcribed the preſent increaſe of poverty.

By ſupplying this deficiency, and by protecting it on all occaſions, the evil will be removed.

Eaſy and ſimple as the remedy may appear, it is fraught with difficulties infinitely involved, and compounded: to effect this laborious undertaking, much reſolution will be required.

That the adoption of any new ſyſtem muſt be attended with perplexity and trouble, will readily

be admitted; much leſs can it be expected, that one ſhould be accompliſhed with eaſe, in which the inveterate prejudices of long habit, are in the new proceſs, to be completely annihilated.

Great encouragement however is to be derived as to the practicability of the propoſed meaſure, by obſerving with what eaſe moſt of the new ſtate taxes are impoſed, and collected; although it muſt be acknowledged, that every additional one hath to ſtruggle with multiplied difficulties. Were the following propoſed outline or ſketch of a ſyſtem for general relief ſubmitted to publick conſideration, on the baſis alone of hypothetical reaſoning, or as a ſcheme of the cloſet, it nevertheleſs ought not haſtily and prematurely to be rejected, leſt it contain hints that might give birth to ſome other plan more adapted to practice, and leſs dependent on theory for its recommendation: but when the mode hereafter ſuggeſted is conſidered, as it really is, deſtitute of the leaſt claim to merit as a new invention, or ingenious ſpeculation, and ſimply as an extention of that brotherly combination which in ſmall communities hath been ſucceſsfully tried during the laſt half century, not with a few aſſociated individuals, but by numbers greatly exceeding half a million of ſubjects; the model of the friendly ſocieties, on which the new ſyſtem is propoſed to be raiſed, cannot with

juſtice be conſidered as ideal, nor can the happy experiments already made, with perhaps a ſeventh of that ſociety whoſe future comfort is the object of the preſent inveſtigation, be rejected as incompatible with practice, and diſregarded as the enthuſiaſtic deluſion of an hypotheſis, uncontrolled by a due knowledge of mankind.

On the poſſibility of not only accompliſhing, but of rendering practicable four important objects, chiefly depend the ſtructure of the ſyſtem in contemplation.

Leſt the building, like the ancient exiſting edifice, be hereafter diſcovered fundamentally erroneous in principle, its corner ſtones ſhould firſt be well examined.

The total abrogation of the preſent poor's laws, and the aſſeſſments in conſequence of them, will be attended with but little difficulty, when the wiſdom of parliament ſhall deem it expedient to adopt more ſalutary meaſures. The three other conſiderations are:

1. *A completely equitable ſubſcription by the employers, paid to, and for the relief of the employed.*

2. *An obligation on the employed, to repay ſuch ſubſcription to the common joint ſtock or fund.*

3. *And a ſuperintendency and control over the whole ordering and management of the ſociety's*

affairs, by the parties intereſted in the joint capital ſtock ſo ſubſcribed and funded.

Should the project now ſubmitted be conſidered the leaſt worthy of attention, as being in theory unexceptionable, apparently politically uſeful, and though difficult not totally incapable of being reduced to practice, little doubt can remain that the kind interpoſition and aſſiſtance of parliament would be wanting, in deviſing, eſtabliſhing, and enforcing ſuch proviſions, as would in future ſecure to that claſs of the people, who are now groaning under a heavy weight of affliction, not only conſiderable relief, but a certain portion of comfort alſo; eſpecially if it be manifeſted that ſuch conſolation can be adminiſtered at a much leſs partial expence to the other diviſion of the community, than that to which at preſent it is liable.

Theſe obligations being of a nature ſomewhat new, are ſubject to impediments unthought of, and unſuſpected; but as the legiſlature is fully competent to exact obedience to ſuch ordinances as in its wiſdom may be found requiſite, *the examination will* ſerve to ſhew the practicability of the plan, without injuſtice to individuals; and the general benefit that muſt eventually follow the other three meaſures being judiciouſly adopted and carried into execution.

The completely equable ſubſcription by the employers will alone be objected to by thoſe who have hitherto been accountable for leſs than they have received; or, in other words, who have paid a leſs ſum in the ſhape of poor's rates, than that which in juſtice ought to have been demanded. No evil can ariſe to the community by putting ſuch perſons on an equal footing with their ſurrounding neighbours. In this claſs may be enumerated, the two great bodies of manufacturers and ſhip-owners; ſingle women, bachelors, and others, not houſekeepers, but who are in the habit of employing ſervants—ſtart not ye to whom Heaven hath thus given the means of employment; nor think the meditated attack upon your wealth is of that nature, to cauſe you a ſhadow of an inconvenience. Humanity forbids the conjecture, that in theſe trying times of misery, ye do not deal out your charity in ten-fold meaſure to that which now may be ſupplicated, to make ſuch donations in future unneceſſary. Should this appeal to ſenſibility fail; let it be recollected, that the ſmall ſum that may hereafter in equity be required, ought rather on the preſent to be demanded as a right; becauſe it hath been unequivocally maintained, that all individuals whoſe income or occupation enables them to receive and pay for the ſervices of another, *virtually* reſerve that portion out *of the*

earnings of the ſervant, which they would hereafter *only be called upon to reimburſe.*

The weekly ſubſcription that hath been found ſufficient to protect the members in friendly ſocieties from poverty, hath been raiſed in proportion to the value of the labour, when compared to the wants of the aſſociated individuals.

The loweſt ſubſcription which hath been uniformly attended with the promiſed ſucceſs, is three pence *per* week*, ſubſcribed out of earnings of 14*d per* day, which amounts to about $3\frac{3}{4}$ *per cent.*

Without entering into any inveſtigation as to the ſufficiency of this ſubſcription, it ſhall be deemed on the preſent occaſion as inadequate to the purpoſe. Inſtead of $3\frac{3}{4}$, let the ſubſcription be rated at 5 *per cent.* or one ſhilling in the pound; or for every 5*d.* one farthing, which will moſt probably be found amply productive. Under this regulation the ſubſcription for each labourer who earns 10*s. per* week, would be 6*d.* or 1*d. per* day, and on every other 5*d.* earned by his wife and family, an addition of one farthing.

Writers on agriculture have agreed, that farms equally divided, or nearly ſo, between paſture and arable land, would require for every

* In a conſiderable manufactory, one farthing in the ſhilling per week ſubſcribed out of the weekly earnings, was found an abundant proviſion.

eighteen acres, about one labourer *per ann.* but as the propoſed plan is meant to be offered with every poſſible calculation againſt it; the following computation will be made, on conſidering that one labourer only ſhould be requiſite for twenty acres.

A farm of this deſcription containing 500 acres, will not be conſidered as over-rated at 10*s.* *per* acre, or 250*l.* *per ann.* Two half crown rates on the rack-rent, alas! no unuſual aſſeſſments for the relief of the poor*, will coſt the farmer £62: 10: 0 a year. Now if he require the aſſiſtance of twenty-five labourers the year round, and each earn 10*s.* *per* week, which is again making conſiderable allowance, it will coſt him weekly for the payment of the 5 *per cent.* thereon 12*s*: 6*d.* or only £. 32: 10: 0 *per ann.* Or let the caſe be ſtated the other way, and ſuppoſe the whole manual labour expended upon the farm in the courſe of the year, coſts the farmer £. 650. In either caſe it is of no ſort of conſe-

* The poor's rates in the pariſh of Bocking in the county of Eſſex, have exceeded the rental about £300. "Here circumſtances have combined to render the ſituation of the poor truly deplorable; they have almoſt univerſally been compelled to apply for parochial aſſiſtance, which I much fear has ſo much repreſſed that laudable independent ambition that formerly actuated the induſtrious labourers, as greatly to check their exertions for their own ſupport."

quence whether this expenditure be earned by men only, or with the additional aſſiſtance of women and children, the ſum paid being the ſame, the reſerved proportion of 5 *per cent.* thereon, muſt amount alſo to the like ſum of £.32 : 10*s.* : 0*d.* which will leave the farmer a clear gainer of £.30 a year.

Aſſuredly the 5 *per cent.* is liable to ſome danger, whilſt in the poſſeſſion of the employed, previouſly to the payment of his weekly ſubſcription; but as there can be no other objection to his being veſted with it, than the fear of retribution, ſome hazard ſhould be run; ſome difficulties encountered, and means ſhould be deviſed for inſuring the performance of this obligation, to preſerve entire ſo important a feature in the ſcheme propoſed.

Every labourer ought to be inſtructed, that the ſix-pence he receives from his employer, at the concluſion of his week's work, he is as juſtly entitled to, as the other 10*s.* to which ſum his wages amount. That the ſix-pence ſo paid to him, is his; but that as he in common with the reſt of mankind, is liable to be diſabled and incapable of work for a ſhort time whilſt young, and for a longer continuance when advanced in years, the law hath recommended it to him, (and ſhould he refuſe to comply, means would be at hand to compel his obedience) to put this

ſix-pence into the hands of ſome reſponſible perſon, who ſhould be approved of, and elected by the ſociety (ſuppoſe the miniſter in country places) there to remain, or be put out to intereſt, as may be deemed moſt expedient for the ſole purpoſe of his and the other members of his ſociety reſorting to it, in all adjudged caſes of neceſſity. His having once had the poſſeſſion of the ſixpence, gives him a property in it, which he will never forget; and the recollection of his having ſo many ſixpences in the general ſtock, will not only give him an intereſt in the preſevation of it, and a watchful jealouſy over the payments of others, but an unremitting attention to its ſubſequent diſpoſal, which conſtitutes the great efficiency of the joint capital. Whereas if he be in the habit of hearing only, that ſuch payments are weekly made on his behalf, or even if he ſee the ſixpence paid by his employer, at the very inſtant he receives his wages, yet will he not be ſo ſenſibly alive to the common intereſt of the ſociety, ſo vigilantly attentive that all do pay that, which they thus receive, and that none have relief that are not adjudged by their neighbours as properly entitled thereto.

In proportion as men are thought truſt worthy, ſo, in general, may they be truſted; ſuſpicion has certainly made more delinquents than well directed confidence; yet it is neceſſary that

all ſhould alike be deemed liable to a poſſible violation of the truſt repoſed.

Should this ſyſtem, on a future day, be carried properly into execution, it would leave no excuſe for pilfering and petty crimes; it would elevate the mind, reduce its wretchedneſs, and increaſe its morality; as ſuch, little doubt is to be apprehended, that the penalty, which by law might be annexed to this breach of duty, would ſoon have the effect of preventing theſe miſdemeanors, eſpecially when aſſiſted by exhortations from the pulpit, and the friendly admonitions of the other ſociety. As ſoon as a child were capable of earning even five-pence, its ſubſcription, amounting to one farthing, would become due, and muſt be paid. At the time of life when ſuch irregularities are moſt likely to be committed, the proportion already ſubſcribed by the offender, might, probably, be very conſiderable; a forfeiture of a certain portion of it to the funded property, would, in a great meaſure, prevent the evil. The loſs, however, of a ſum of money, his only, for ſpecific purpoſes, and unattainable for the like prodigal occaſions, that induced his *former* treſpaſs; beſides, being ſomewhat inconſiſtent with the general character of the deſign, might, as the puniſhment would not be immediately felt, be little regarded; as ſuch, in all probability, it were better that ſomething

like the following ſhould be ſubſtituted. On neglect, or refuſal to pay the ſubſcription, on the firſt week's earnings, ſuppoſe them to amount to 10*s.* until after the expiration of Wedneſday in the next week, 10 *per cent.* or 1*s.*—2d week 1*s.*6*d.* —3d week 2*s.*—4th week 2*s.* 6*d.*; or 10 *per cent.* the 1ſt week— 15 *per cent.* the 2d.— 20 *per cent.* the 3d.—and 25 *per cent* for the 4th.

On a ſuppoſition that the earnings were regularly 10*s.* *per* week, inſtead of his ſubſcription amounting to 2*s.* for the month; had he been regular, 7*s.* or nearly three fourths of his week's earnings muſt now be deducted to ſatisfy the increaſed ſum of his defaults. A very material objection to the whole plan may probably be imagined, viz. that after the five *per cent.* is advanced by the employers, and regularly repaid to the receiver of weekly ſubſcriptions by the employed, which will alſo, *prima facie*, be much queſtioned; ſhould it be found inſufficient, the former muſt ſtill, as before, be under the neceſſity, in all caſes of emergency, of ſupporting the latter.

This inconvenience can alone take place by the employers, who hold the means, denying employment to the other ſociety. As the collection of the ſubſcription may be completely ſecured, as no expence whatever would be chargeable thereon, and as the revenue ſhould

not be liable to reduction on any occaſion or pretence, the five *per cent.* on the property of the member of the employed ſociety, *i.e.* on their productive labour and ingenuity, may implicitly be received, and confidently regarded, not only as an ample, but an abundant proviſion, as well for the purpoſes already mentioned of general relief, as for another not leſs important object of the deſign, that of granting, by annuity, a comfortable ſubſiſtence to thoſe on the decline of life, or in the vale of years, to whoſe virtuous conduct, and induſtrious exertions, the community have been under ſuch high obligations. To every perſon attaining the age of ſixty-three, or, as hereafter may be determined upon, whoſe ſober induſtrious life ſhall merit the good opinion of his ſurrounding neighbours, and from a committee of whom, being duly authorized, a recommendation to ſuch benefit ſhall be obtained, an annuity of at leaſt £. 20 a year to every perſon ſo deſervedly entitled, ſhould be granted. This annuity, in addition to the ſurplus property their meritorious endeavours may have provided them, and in the poſſeſſion of which they will have been completely protected, will be ſufficient to inſure not only the common neceſſaries conſiſtent with their former ſtations, but ſuch a proportion of little comforts, as old age, and the infirmities of laborious people, the conſe-

quence of extraordinary exertions, abſolutely require. To theſe bleſſings their former irreproachable conduct will juſtly entitle them, and all good men will rejoice in beholding them ſo deſervedly happy.

Thus will every member of the employed ſociety be enabled to retire from the fatigue of labour, and paſs in tranquil eaſe the remainder of an honeſt and induſtrious life; not on the degrading terms of ſupplicating and accepting the ſhelter of an alms-houſe, and the weekly bounty of its charitable founder; but on the reſerved proportion of his own labour, conceded by himſelf, and kindly protected by the laws of his country, will he proudly claim the juſt reward of every good citizen.

To many who are, and have been largely contributory to the wants of the poor, but who have not given the ſubject of poverty, or the means by which it may be relieved much thought, the arguments on which this ratio of five *per cent.* is founded, may not, perhaps, be unacceptable.

The committee of the Houſe of Commons, on the bill now pending, for the general incloſure and improvement of waſte lands, hath ſtated, that out of about forty-ſeven millions of acres, comprehending the ſurface territory of England and

Wales, there are only about thirty-nine millions now under cultivation.

Taking the average price of labour over the iſland, at 1*s.* 3*d.* *per* day, the huſbandman's expence on this account hath been calculated by writers on rural affairs, at £.1 : 3 : 4 *per* acre. On the preſent increaſe of wages, an augmentation to that ſum muſt be made, which cannot be eſtimated at leſs than 2*s.* 8*d.* making the general average, at this time, for the manual labour in huſbandry, £.1 : 6. *per* acre. It is clearly of no importance by whom this labour is performed, whether by man alone, or with the aſſiſtance of women, boys, and girls, as the payments to all deſcriptions of working people are included in the ſum of £.1 : 6 *per* acre abovementioned. Allowing one-fourth of this labour to be done by women and children, and each to earn five ſhillings *per* week, or half the wages of the men, out of £.50,700,000 paid by the huſbandmen, on the yearly employment of 1,462,500 men, and 975,000 women and children, £.38,025,000 will be paid to the former, and £.12,675,000 to the latter. The men ſubſcribing only ſix-pence, and the women and children only three-pence *per* week each, on their reſpective earnings, would produce an annual revenue of £.2,535,000. To this fund no inconſiderable ſum is to be added for the like revenue on all other deſcrip-

tions of labour and ingenuity, accruing from the labouring hand, whether in the ſervice of government, noblemen, private gentlemen and ladies, profeſſional perſons, or artiſts. And in the employment of manufacturers, merchants, tradeſmen, mechanics, mariners, &c. &c. To what ſum the five *per cent.* may amount, on the value of the property (*i. e.* labour) belonging to theſe claſſes of the employed ſociety, is not eaſily aſcertainable. If the number, engaged as ſervants and labourers, of all deſcriptions, be conſidered as equal only to thoſe employed in agriculture, and their earnings be reckoned at no greater ſum, (which, taken together, will certainly be admitted a very moderate computation) an income, equal to the former, or £.2,535,000 more will ariſe in addition, making an annual revenue of £.5,070,000 for the ſupport of the whole ſociety.

This capital is to be underſtood not only as the groſs product, or per centage on the value of the total earnings; but as a net ſum, excluſively of all deductions, applicable alone to the relief and benefit of the ſubſcribing perſons.

If a compariſon be required between this reſerved ſurplus property, and the preſent aids collected for the uſe and relief of the ſociety, county charges where ſuch are included, and all expences attendant on the gathering or diſtribu-

tion of the three millions, as lately ſtated in parliament, to be the annual amount of the poor's rates in England, muſt firſt be deducted.

In conſequence of the defects in the original conſtitution of the poor's laws, a very conſiderable proportion of the preſent aſſeſſment, hath for a great length of time been applied in that moſt expenſive and unproductive way of all others to their comfort, *viz.* in litigations in the courts of juſtice, attendancies on magiſtrates for advice, and authority, and in the enormous expence of hunting the ſociety of the poor, from Penzance in Cornwall, to Berwick upon Tweed; or from the flat coaſt of England to the mountains in Wales. To theſe muſt be added the charges incurred by the maintenance and ſupport of the impotent poor; all of which muſt neceſſarily be deducted from the groſs ſum of three millions. Whatever ſum may have been applied to this laſt ſervice, may be conſidered as having been dealt out with the moſt ſparing hand and parſimonious frugality of overſeers, the expenditure of the other ſums, neither the vigilance nor frugality of overſeers, hath power to control. "'Tis pariſh buſineſs and muſt be paid for accordingly."

The poſitive expence of carrying the laws into execution, and other parochial buſineſs, hath been ſtated at more than one ſixth; but, as the ſyſtem

in contemplation doth not require the depreciation of that in exiſtence, to recommend it to attention, let the law charges, attendance on magiſtrates, county rates for publick buildings, maintenance and proſecution of felons, &c. &c. removal of paupers to their ſettlements, and other pariſh expences be taken at one twelfth only;—on three millions this will amount to £. 250,000, and let the aſſiſtance afforded the impotent or permanently poor be eſtimated at twice that ſum, the remaining £. 2,250,000, will be the net money annually appropriate to the relief of the ſociety of the employed when under temporary poverty, and on which alone the compariſon ought to be made. The whole of theſe calculations are made ſo much within the correct line of truth, that notwithſtanding the expence incurred by the ſeveral intended bounties upon induſtry, and the funds reſerved for the payment of the propoſed annuities, are claims entirely new, and will neceſſarily demand a conſiderable proviſion; yet, there is every reaſon to believe the reſidue for the relief and ſupport of the poor, will bear a proportion of three to one in favor of the propoſed meaſure, with the ſum now actually expended for this ſpecific purpoſe.

Many attempts have been made to fix the number of perſons at which on an average each family ſhould be taken. The mean of the ſeveral

ſums for the preſent purpoſe, may be conſidered as five. In the event of a father of a family being rendered incapable of work, on his applying for parochial aſſiſtance, at a time when he received 1*s.* 6*d.* *per* day; *or rather* 9*s.* *per week only* for his labour; the practice hath been with ſeveral magiſtrates, to order relief in the proportion of one ſhilling each, to the man and his wife, and 10*d.* *per* week to each of their children.

Under this regulation, a family of five would receive 4*s.* 6*d.* or one half of what the week's labour of the huſband would have produced. For the ſake of round numbers, let the magiſtrate's allowance be extended to 5*s.* *per* week, and let the father of the family be ſuppoſed incapable of work four weeks in the year; agreeably to this ſuppoſed caſe, the remaining ſum out of the preſent poor's aſſeſſment of £. 2,250,000, would relieve the like number of families, and conſequently £. 11,250,000 perſons during a month every year. If in reply it be ſtated that the average of perſons who receive occaſional, or temporary relief in England, during a month every year, cannot poſſibly amount to this number; the fact will by no means be inſiſted upon. Should it be found deviating from truth, to the exceſs of ſome millions of people, the purpoſe of the enquiry will yet be anſwered, in not having *under rated* the former ſum of £. 2,250,000, which hath

been aſſumed as the net ſum annually applied to the relief of accidental, or temporary poverty.

To aſcertain the wages paid by the employers, printed tickets, with blanks, readily filled up, ſhould be in the poſſeſſion of the other ſociety; theſe ſhould be made complete, by the addition of the ſum received of the employers, and given to them as a diſcharge for wages. Tables would eaſily be conſtructed, by which the five *per cent.* on any ſum earned, would at once be found, ſo that hence, little difficulty would ariſe; the pariſh-clerk, every Sunday morning, on being duly authorized, might collect theſe tickets of the employers and give them to the miniſter, who, being empowered to receive the ſame, would, from ſimilar tables, calculate the ſubſcription due on each ticket; and, in caſe the parties did not attend to pay, or cauſe to be paid ſuch ſubſcription, it ſhould be increaſed week after week, as before propoſed; after four ſuch omiſſions, a note ſhould be ſent round to all the employers in the pariſh, or diſtrict, intimating what was due on this ſcore; and the perſon, in whoſe employ ſuch defaulter then might be, ſhould be obliged to retain, out of the earnings of ſuch labourer, for that week, and become anſwerable for the ſame himſelf, the whole ſum ſtated at the time to be due to the aſſociation, from the perſon guilty of ſuch omiſſions. The

effect of thus making publick a tranſaction, that each individual would gladly endeavour to hide, would operate powerfully to prevent a repetition in the ſame member, and be an excellent admonitory leſſon for his ſurrounding neighbours.

Pride, or the fear of ſhame, ſtimulates, in all caſes, more to do right, than the apprehenſion of puniſhment prevents the doing wrong.

As it hath in the former part of the enquiry been ſhewn, that even thoſe in the ſuperior ſtations of life, are in a certain degree liable to poverty; ſo no one ought to be above ſubſcribing his quota to the humble fund, becauſe he may proudly conceit his circumſtances preclude even the poſſibility of ſuch a degradation. Another reaſon occurs, which makes that politically neceſſary, which otherways might not be conſidered as prudentially requiſite. No one ought to be eligible to any ſuperintendency or control over the affairs of the aſſociation but the ſubſcribers themſelves. Now as the employers have not yet been conſidered in this point of light, they certainly, until they become ſubſcribers, cannot be ſuppoſed to have any juriſdiction or authority whatever over the funds ſubſcribed by the other ſociety. But, as without doubt, it would be generally uſeful to have the benefit of their experience and judgment in the adminiſtration, conjointly with that of the other ſo-

ciety, it would be found needful that all gentlemen, (and ladies ſhould they think proper, eſpecially if reſiding in the country) ſhould each ſubſcribe at leaſt their 6*d. per* week; not with any view to future benefit, but to ſecure a voice in the ordering and management of the internal affairs of their reſpective pariſhes. The like payments ſhould alſo extend to the farmers, and other reſidents in villages, being of the ſociety of employers.

In all matters relating to the joint concern, or aſſociation, a certain number of members ſhould make a committee to determine upon them.

A certain number of members ſhould conſtitute a viſiting committee, who ſhould determine in what proportion any member may require aſſiſtance, on being rendered incapable of labour. Over this committee the magiſtrates ſhould preſide, and to whom, as at preſent, all appeals ſhould be made in caſes of diſagreement. Other committees would probably be found neceſſary, ſhould the maturation of the ſyſtem be ever in contemplation. Theſe ſhould be compoſed of not leſs than three members, two of which, and in that proportion, ſhould be of the employed ſociety; every one of whom ſhould be equally eligible, after attaining twenty-one years of age.

ALL THE PRESENT LEGAL DISTINCTIONS OF PARTIES, BELONGING TO THIS OR TO THAT PLACE, WOULD CEASE; THAT OF BEING AN ENGLISH SUBJECT WOULD ALONE BE THE DISTINCTION REQUIRED.

A regular account ſhould be opened and kept with each individual member, wherein credit ſhould be given for every ſubſcription paid to the fund, and the parties debited with all ſums drawn out for aſſiſtance. The remaining balance alone the members ſhould have the power of transferring to the ſtock of the aſſociation only, in the place to which he or ſhe may meditate a removal. A balance amounting to a certain ſum of this funded property, proportionate to the age and ſtate of health of any member, ſhould be indiſpenſably neceſſary to gain admittance into a new aſſociation. Without gaining ſuch admiſſion, no one ſhould be permitted to become a new reſident in any pariſh or diſtrict.

Whether the fund ſo collected in each pariſh or diſtrict ſhould there remain for the ſervice of the ſubſcribing members therein, the ſurplus once a quarter being remitted to one grand treaſury, or general fund; or, the ſubſcription being inadequate to the demands, a ſum once a quarter be applied for to anſwer ſuch deficiency; or, whether it ſhould be added to all the like ſubſcriptions within each hundred, each county, or ſhire

is for future conſideration. Difficulties will be attendant on the firſt arrangements in any way; but ſo far as any determination can be formed without the help of experience, the firſt method hath the preference.

The ſmaller the aſſociations, the better their internal buſineſs will be managed; and the only inconveniency will be, that of the parties removing from one pariſh or diſtrict to another, which may be provided againſt with little trouble.

It, perhaps, may be important, that the general treaſury of this funded property be divided; one eſtabliſhed in London for the ſouth, and the other in York or Newcaſtle, for the north of England; though each ſhould be under the ſame regulations, and both equally amenable to the neceſſities of the ſubſcribers.

A per centage ſhould be allowed the clergyman in each pariſh or diſtrict for receiving the ſubſcriptions, out of which he ſhould ſatisfy the clerk for the trouble he may have in collecting the tickets from the employers. Security ſhould be given by the clergyman, according to the ſurplus ſum likely at any time to be in his poſſeſſion, between one quarter day and another. As no one ought to be benefited by the uſe of the ſociety's money, each reſpective treaſury ſhould have power to order the remittances from ſuch pariſhes or diſtricts more frequently than

once a quarter, where the accruing balance ſhould be ſo conſiderable as to become an object to the funded property. Theſe two grand capitals, when united together, ſhould, at ſtated times, be placed out at intereſt, under proper direction, in the publick funds, or on other permanent ſecurity. After the accumulation of a certain ſum, which ſhould be conſidered as a ſacred fund, not to be broken in upon; but with its intereſt left to increaſe, and to remain as a proviſion in times of ſcarcity like the preſent: whatever might hereafter be the reſidue in favor of the ſociety, after ſatisfying the claims of the incapacitated, and the annuities awarded to ſoldiers, ſailors, and perſons of advanced ages, ſhould yearly, or as often as might be thought proper, be applied to the binding of children out as apprentices, or to any other purpoſes, which, from time to time, might generally be recommended by the aſſociation, and conſented to by parliament.

As it would be impoſſible that a plan of this ſort, involving many difficulties, and creating much labour, could be carried into execution without a certain expence being incurred in receiving the ſubſcriptions—keeping the accounts, —tranſacting the various buſineſs of each aſſociation, and correſponding with all the others, a proviſion is propoſed to be made for ſuch expence, not out of the ſociety's funds, which are

intended to be kept free of all deduction; but by charging 5 *per cent.* on all allowances granted for aſſiſtance, and on the transferring or removal of any member's individual property from one aſſociation to that of another*. The former will amount but to a few pence weekly, which will not inconvenience thoſe who are relieved; and *the latter, which may be of more conſiderable amount, will have the deſirable effect of preventing that reſtleſs ſpirit in* ſome individuals which by experience *hath been proved to be greatly ſubverſive of good order, and the peace of ſociety.* The whole of this propoſed meaſure, it may be neceſſary to obſerve, hath relation alone to the ſociety of the employed, who may be liable to become members of the ſociety of the poor; and hath no reference whatever to thoſe who are now permanent members of that ſociety.

This impotent devoted part of the community muſt, however, on no account be neglected, or their little comforts ſacrificed or forgot in making proviſion for the more robuſt. Many of the

* Wool-combers, weavers, and others, are neceſſarily obliged, frequently, to remove for employment. On producing a certificate from the viſiting committee, that work was not to be obtained in the then place of their reſidence, it, perhaps, would be found reaſonable to allow the removal of the balance, for the purpoſe of obtaining employ without payment of this premium.

former claſs, in large towns, are comparatively ſpeaking, tolerably well off, in alms-houſes, hoſpitals, and other retirements endowed with annual incomes for this charitable purpoſe: yet, are there very many others in the kingdom phyſically incapacitated, who are neglected and remain deſtitute of ſuch comforts, with equal claims on the attention of the benevolent.

The greater number of this deſcription are perſons in an advanced period of life. The probability of their continuing long burthenſome, is not great; but ſo long as they may exiſt, it is an incumbent duty on that ſociety which hath benefited by their former exertions, to provide them comfortably with food, clothing, and an habitation.

That this purpoſe may be effected with the ſame equity which hath been endeavoured to be preſerved throughout the whole of the propoſed plan, let an average of the poor's rates, for ſeven years, previouſly to the year 1794, be aſcertained in every pariſh or diſtrict; let this average ſum be levied as uſual, after deducting therefrom the total amount of the 5 *per cent.* advanced by each individual to labourers, and ſervants; and let the reſidue be ſolely applied to the maintenance, and more comfortable ſupport of the impotent poor, ſo long as any of that claſs may remain, who were found in that ſtate and

condition at the commencement of the new ſyſtem. The donations to every pariſh, when added to the money ſo collected, will be found an ample proviſion for this purpoſe, without reſorting to the aid of any additional publick burthen. As the claimants can neither be augmented nor renewed, and as from age, they would rapidly decreaſe in point of number, ſhould a trifling deficiency ariſe on the firſt year of the experiment, a very ſmall ſum anticipated, of the next, would probably accommodate the difference. But as the ſum ſo raiſed would perhaps in moſt inſtances be found more than ſufficient, the overplus calculated at ſo much in the pound, ſhould yearly be repaid to thoſe from whom it was collected; every ſucceeding year would, agreeably to the common courſe of nature, increaſe the amount of ſuch repayments, until a neceſſity for raiſing this ſupply would no longer exiſt.

The donations by will, or otherways, being given for the expreſs purpoſe of meliorating the condition of particular poor perſons, ought, and muſt ſtill remain in each reſpective pariſh, ſpecifically applicable to the original intention of the ſeveral donors; but as a time would come, when the ſociety of the employed would no longer have occaſion to reſort to the aſſiſtance derivable from the bounty of others, ſuch donations, in a great meaſure, would thereby become un-

neceſſary, yet the money ariſing from benefactions of this deſcription might ſtill be laid out conſonantly to the humane deſign of each legatee, in the education, care, and maintenance of foundlings, deſerted orphans, the children of the indigent born incapable of obtaining a livelihood, or other imbecile perſons not having property. In the event of its amount being of greater importance than ſuch or other accidental poverty might demand, then it might be applied to the augmentation of the preſent ſtipends, or to the further building of alms-houſes for the retirement of the aged and meritorious.—It may not here be altogether improper to obſerve, that a reviſion of the powers granted or aſſumed in the ordering and diſpoſal of ſuch donations, will be extremely worthy the ſtricteſt enquiry of parliament, and inveſtigation in the courts of Weſtminſter-hall. In many inſtances the benevolent diſpoſition of feeling minds hath been, and continues to be completely fruſtrated; made ſubſervient to the peculiar intereſt of certain individuals, or to circumſtances leſs intitled to apology.

When, in conſequence of the demiſe of the preſent impotent ſociety, and that, by correcting the preſent ſhameful abuſes, the donations to the poor ſhall be duly applied to their neceſſities, the occupier of five hundred acres of land, as before ſtated, will become a ſaver of £.30 a year.

This balance would be completely in his favor, did not prudence, as it may regard his own family, and policy, as it reſpects his ſituation with the ſociety of the employed, direct, that he ſhould ſubſcribe for his wife, children, and himſelf, in ſuch proportion as he may judge expedient. Admit he have three children; ſhould he think proper to ſubſcribe ſix-pence weekly, for himſelf and wife, and two-pence each for his children, it would amount to a ſubſcription equal to one on the weekly earnings of 20 *s.* In the unfortunate event of his becoming indigent, himſelf and family would have the power to reſort to the fund, and claim a proportional aſſiſtance; and as this proviſion would reduce his ſavings only 52 *s.* a year, he would ſtill remain a gainer by the propoſed arrangement, of £.27 : 8 : 0 *per annum.*

It may poſſibly be objected, that the annuities to aged perſons, and the allowances hereafter propoſed to widows and foſter parents, on the earnings of children above ſeven years of age, will, in both caſes, act more as a bounty on their induſtry and good conduct, which the deſign ought to take no concern in, than as an aid for their reſpective wants, which alone ought to be the object of a plan for the general relief of the poor. In reply to which, let it be obſerved, that it is to the diſregard of theſe very material cir-

cumſtances in the preſent ſyſtem of the poor's laws, that the moſt important inconveniencies have ariſen; and, that on due examination of the principles on which the whole of the propoſed arrangement is founded, it will appear, that the ſucceſs of the new meaſure is entirely dependent on rendering the ſurplus property of the employed, equally efficient with that of the employers; or, in other words, to the maintaining the honeſt induſtrious labourer in the full enjoyment of whatever property he may ſo acquire.

To diſpaſſionate minds the proofs already adduced will ſurely be concluſive that a permanent proviſion for the ſociety of the employed, founded on the reſervation and protection of *its own ſubſcribed property*, and not on the voluntary ſubſcriptions or legal aſſeſſments on the ſociety of the employers, is the only meaſure by which this important deſideratum can be effected. As a corroborating teſtimony, however, it may not be improper to examine the conſequences that generally reſult from indiſcriminate benevolence, either by charitable donations or parochial taxes. It hath been ſtated, that "neceſſity begat labour," ſo alſo may neceſſity be conſidered the parent of induſtry, the great ſtimulus to exertion; but, as exertion is attended with fatigue, the natural love of eaſe too generally prompts the lower claſſes to rely on a precarious maintenance,

from the diſgraceful profeſſion of begging. The ſhilling, when indiſcriminately given in CHARITY, is, in general, defrauding the ſtate of at leaſt half a crown. One of the moſt important features in the compact of civil ſociety, is reciprocity of intereſt. The *common beggar makes no return*, but the cant of his profeſſional thanks, which is often attended with an hypocritical fervour that amounts to profaneneſs; whilſt the kind hearted giver improvidently gratifies an impulſe of benevolence, at a national expence, equal to three times the value of what he beſtows. Though the mendicant have loſt an eye, a leg, or an arm, yet is this no excuſe for laying the beneficent under contribution. How many thouſands obtain a comfortable ſubſiſtence under all the diſadvantages of ſimilar misfortunes? Let employment be provided; let earnings be ſecurely protected, but let indiſcriminate charity be withheld. An old maxim ſays, " *were there no receivers, there would be no thieves;*" ſo, in like manner, did no one give alms, there would be few to ſupplicate them. It is erroneous to conſider that this ſpecies of *charity* ſupports the poor! it adminiſters to the poverty alone, of all thoſe who rely on ſuch uncertain ignoble means of ſupport. The very bounty by which their exiſtence is continued, adds to the degradation of being poor; and deſtitute as beggars are of uſeful em-

ployment, the poignant hour frequently occur, which teaches them to feel, that man can partake of no enjoyment equal to the conſciouſneſs of being juſtly entitled to the comforts which reſult from the independent returns of his honeſt induſtry. Hence the vagrant objects of charity muſt neceſſarily be conſidered unhappy in themſelves, incumbrances on ſociety, and, like drones in the induſtrious hive, uſeleſs, and diſregarded members of the community. Charity is, undoubtedly, one of the greateſt ornaments of human nature, and there certainly is no country ſo eminently conſpicuous as Britain, for this benevolent ſentiment; yet, where it is incautiouſly laviſhed, or diſtributed without great judgment and care, it is liable to the worſt ſort of abuſe, and to become the cauſe of the moſt important evils.

The immenſe charitable proviſion* made for

* In one of the diſtricts of a Metropolitan county, a table was adjuſted by the magiſtrates laſt winter, which aſcertained the weekly income, indiſpenſably requiſite for a labouring man, according to the number of his family, and the price of the gallon loaf. The table was unfortunately printed and diſperſed. The wages in huſbandry, was, at this time, generally raiſed to nine ſhillings *per* week. This ſum, *though not earned*, many would be content to have deducted from the regulated allowance, and preſenting the printed table, as an order from the magiſtrates to the overſeer, they diſgracefully continued to accept, week after week, this bounty on their

the ſociety of the employed, during the winter, and the preſent high price of food, though extremely humane, yet, wanting due adminiſtration, hath, in many inſtances, been attended with effects greatly to be deplored. The efforts of the peaſantry for ſubſiſtence have relaxed, and induſtry hath ſuffered a check that time and plenty can only reſtore to its former energy. Individuals, who before had diſdained pariſh-aſſiſtance, as in a common cauſe, have become reconciled to pariſh-relief, and, in taking their ſhare of the weekly ſcramble, have familiarized their minds to that, at which, on former occaſions, their hearts would have revolted. In the confidence of obtaining this unmerited ſupply, work hath been executed without induſtry, and employment hath been ſought with indifference.

It is to be apprehended, that, on the moſt proſperous occaſions, the quantity of labour performed in this kingdom, is greatly below its juſt and true proportion, when compared with the number of its *working* inhabitants; but, on the preſent, it is infinitely reduced indeed, which, with propriety, can be attributed alone to the operation of profuſely, and indiſcriminately,

idleneſs. The deficiency of the labour, performed within the operation of theſe printed tables, may, on a moderate calculation, be eſtimated at one ſixth.

giving alms, inſtead of furniſhing employment. A reliance on this amiable, though impolitic ſentiment, daily augments the number of vagrant candidates for charity; and the proviſion which the preſent laws, without any diſtinction, make for poor perſons, whether deſerving, or not, of their protection, induces many to refrain from induſtrious purſuits on the ſlighteſt pretence, and to confide on their genius in fabricating the piteous tale to ſtrangers for their ſupport, or on their legal claim to aſſiſtance from pariſh ſettlement.

Were the amount of the donations to the 10,000 pariſhes in England obtained—were the voluntary ſubſcriptions for the ſupport of various benevolent inſtitutions collected—and could the money that is daily given in other charities be aſcertained, the aggregate ſum would exceed all belief or calculation. Were this properly applied, in affording the means of employment to all thoſe who are capable of working, how many would it happily and comfortably ſupport, who are now loſt to ſociety; and what an immenſe return of national wealth would accrue by their productive labour!

PROPOSED OUTLINE

OF THE

GENERAL SUBSCRIPTION.

INTO the hands of a perſon duly appointed and authorized to receive the ſame, there ſhould be paid, weekly, 5 *per cent.* or one ſhilling in the pound, (being for every 10*d.* one $\frac{1}{2}$) on the amount of every member's daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly produce of labour; *i. e.* earnings; whether obtained by wages, by ſalary, by commiſſion, by *per centage*, by working day-work, tide-work, by the great, by the piece, or by any kind of taſk-work, or other mode whatever, in the following manner. That is to ſay, one ſingle man, or ſingle woman's daily labour; the ſame. On ſingle, or married men, living and reſiding in the families of their employers, whether they be in the ſervice of government, noblemen, gentlemen, ladies, manufacturers, merchants, profeſſional perſons, artiſts, tradeſmen, mechanics, inland navigators, farmers, graziers, or of perſons of any other ſtationary occupation whatever. The boarding and lodging of each may be eſtimated at

£. 15: 3s: 4d; boys under 14 years of age at £. 9: 15: 0 each, *per annum:* their wages taken at the ſum actually paid, and their perquiſites * at a fair valuation.

On ſingle or married men, living or reſiding in the families of their maſters and miſtreſſes, as ſervants in, or out of livery; their boarding, lodging, and clothes may be eſtimated at £. 26; boys under 14 years of age at £. 17: 6: 8 each, *per ann.* their wages taken at the ſum actually paid, and their perquiſites at a fair valuation.

On ſingle or married women, living and reſiding as ſervants in families of noblemen, gentlemen, ladies, manufacturers, merchants, profeſſional perſons, artiſts, tradeſmen, mechanics, mariners, farmers, graziers, or of perſons of any other occupation whatever; their board and lodging may be eſtimated at £. 13; girls under 14 years of age, at £. 8: 13: 4 each, *per ann.* their wages taken at the ſum actually paid, and their perquiſites at a fair valuation.

* Although perquiſites in moſt common caſes may appear too trifling to become an object of general attention, and incapable of being eſtimated with preciſion; yet as there are many ſituations to which they are attached as the ſole reward of ſervices, it would have been incompatible with the plan to have omitted this deſcription of earnings.

The amount of theſe ſubſcriptions, with regard to future aſſiſtance, as alſo the balance of each member's account with the aſſociation, ſhould be conſidered (ſo far as relates to the extent of each individual's power over it) as immediately belonging to the reſpective ſubſcribers; but, on their marrying, the balance of each party's ſubſcription ſhould be added together, and be deemed the joint ſtock of the new family, *incapable of being removed without the mutual conſent of both huſband and wife*..

Whilſt a new married couple are without children, it will be expected that the woman earn at leaſt her maintenance, which before hath been ſtated at £. 13 *per ann.* and on which three-pence *per* week would be due and payable. But as the wife would neceſſarily be much engaged in the affairs of her family, the huſband out of his own earnings ſhould always be obliged to make up, whatever the advance of the wife's employers might be ſhort of three pence weekly. As their family increaſes, it will be more than probable that the whole ſubſcription muſt be furniſhed by himſelf; in which caſe, on a ſuppoſition that he earn £. 26 a year, or 10*s.* *per* week, which is about the average income of the great body of labourers employed in huſbandry, his weekly ſubſcription ſhould be taken, received,

and underſtood in the following proportions, *viz.*

Huſband 6*d.*	Wife 3*d.*			
ditto 5*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	1 Child -	1*d.*	Weekly ſubſcription, nine pence.
ditto 4*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	2 Children	2*d.*	
ditto 3*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	3 ditto - -	3*d.*	
ditto 2*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	4 ditto - -	4*d.*	
ditto 1*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	5 ditto - -	5*d.*	
ditto 0*d.*	ditto 3*d.*	6 ditto - -	6*d.*	

Whilſt the number of his children doth not exceed ſix, under ſeven years of age, his weekly ſubſcription will not exceed the ſum paid at the time of his marriage; but for every child which he may have above that number, under ſeven years of age, another penny muſt weekly be ſubſcribed; but which ſhould ceaſe to be payable on the death of ſuch child or children.

In ſuch pariſhes or diſtricts where there are no funds ariſing from donations to the poor, ſhould any parent have reaſon to apprehend, that one or more of his or her children will be afflicted, either with a mental or corporeal infirmity, that may preclude ſuch child or children earning a future livelyhood, the parents ſhould be compellable to increaſe their former payments out of their own incomes. This addition ſhould be regulated by the apparent degree of impotency, and ſhould be augmented in caſes where the viſit-

ing committee may deem it requiſite. Under the melancholy circumſtances of any natural imbecility attending a child from its birth; though otherwiſe of a healthy conſtitution, its affliction is ſoon diſcoverable, and on being adjudged by the viſiting committee phyſically incapacitated, the parents' ſubſcription in future ſhould be advanced and paid weekly, on a certainty for a ſucceeding number of years, whether the child live or die, to the period when other more perfect children are conſidered as able to earn ſomething towards their maintenance. At the age of 21, the parents would be in duty bound to offer a very handſome certain ſubſcription for the next term, it being at this time more than probable that the helpleſs object now under conſideration, will be a confirmed penſioner upon the aſſociation for many years to come. No appreciation can well be made of ſuch weekly payments: the viſiting committee ſhould determine to what amount theſe ſhould extend, payable as on the former occaſions, on a certainty, for the term enſuing.

On ſingle men and women being duly adjudged incapable of labour, they ſhould be entitled to ſuch allowances *per* week, as the viſiting committee may award; not exceeding the average ſum on which their weekly payment had been made for ten weeks, previouſly to their being

rendered ſo incapable, deducting thereout, as in every other caſe, five *per cent.* or at the rate of one ſhilling, out of the pound, ſo allowed.

On ſingle or married men, or ſingle or married women, living and reſiding as ſervants in the families of their maſters and miſtreſſes, being duly adjudged incapable of their duty, they ſhould be entitled to ſuch allowances *per* week, as the viſiting committee may award, not exceeding one half of the average ſum, for boarding and lodging, or for boarding, waſhing, and clothes, as the caſe may be, on which their weekly payments had been made for ten weeks previouſly to their being incapable of their duty. This allowance ſhould be paid to the maſters or miſtreſſes whilſt the ſervants remain inmates in their families, but on their quitting their maſters or miſtreſſes' houſe, any ſum ſhould then be awarded, not exceeding the full amount of their boarding and lodging; which ſum ſhould then be paid to the ſervants, together with the like allowance, not exceeding the average ſum for wages and perquiſites, on which, as before, for ten weeks, their payments had been made. This laſt allowance ſhould be granted the ſervants, although they be not removed from their maſters or miſtreſſes' houſe, in the event of a ſubſtitute ſervant being engaged, but not otherwiſe.

On married men, not living or reſiding in the

houſes of their employers, being duly adjudged incapable of labour, they ſhould be entitled to ſuch allowance *per* week, as the viſiting committee may award, not exceeding two thirds of the average ſum on which their payments, on account of themſelves, wives, and children, had been made for ten weeks, previouſly to their being rendered incapable of labour.

On married women not living or reſiding in the houſes of their employers, being duly adjudged as before, incapable of their accuſtomed occupation or labour, their huſbands ſhould be intitled to ſuch an allowance as the viſiting committee may award, not exceeding one half of the average ſum on which the huſband's payments, in favour of their wives, had been made for ten weeks, previouſly to their wives being rendered incapable of their accuſtomed work.

On married women being duly adjudged incapable of houſehold and domeſtic affairs, their huſbands ſhould be entitled to any allowance as before, not exceeding the average ſum above-mentioned.

On married perſon's child or children, under ſeven years of age, being duly adjudged in a ſtate to require medical or other aſſiſtance, which the parents alſo ſhall be adjudged incapable of affording, any allowance as before, not exceeding one ſhilling and eight-pence *per* week ſhould

be granted for each child under ſuch circumſtances.

Though it will be expected on the eldeſt child being ſeven years of age, that it ſhould earn, or rather *ought* to earn ſomething, and, of courſe, commence ſubſcribing for itſelf, yet the benefit derivable under the payments of its parents ſhould not ſtop, nor ſhould the child be entitled to any allowance on its own ſubſcription until it exceed the age of fourteen. At this time the previous allowance ſhould ceaſe, and the viſiting committee ſhould award any weekly ſum, not exceeding the whole average amount on which its own payments, for —— weeks, had been made, previouſly to its being rendered incapable of employment. After it become fourteen years of age, it ſhould then be entitled to any allowance, not exceeding three fourths; and on attaining the age of twenty-one, to one half only of the ſum on which its payments, as before, had been made. Theſe regulations are intended to apply alone to children whilſt they remain in the families of their parents. Although, in all common caſes of neceſſity, a maximum hath been adopted in limiting the awarded allowances; yet unfortunate circumſtances may occur to render the higheſt inſufficient to alleviate particular diſtreſs. In ſuch inſtances of accumulated miſery, a certificate ſhould be granted by the

viſiting committee, ſetting forth the nature of the calamity, and the claims of the ſufferers, with a recommendation for ſuch an augmentation to the ſtipend allowed, as in their judgment may appear requiſite. On this being approved by two magiſtrates, the parties ſhould become immediately entitled to ſuch further relief.

The ſubſcription of five *per cent.* on the value of labour, though calculated and intended for the relief of permanent indigency in the ſociety's future advanced ſtages of life, ought not generally to extend its aſſiſtance but to caſes of a temporary, or an accidental nature, until the ſubſcribers ſhall be upwards of ſixty years of age. Yet there are ſome irremediable wretched conditions to which all ages are in common liable, ſuch as idiotiſm—inſanity—blindneſs—loſs of limbs—and many other calamities in the catalogue of human woes, that will be admitted as exceptions even to any general rule.

As the aſſociation is propoſed to be conſtituted on the general idea of alone providing againſt the FUTURE CHANCE OF POVERTY, equity will demand that it ſhould not become liable to the ſupport of early impotency with an almoſt moral certainty of the burthen continuing during the life of the helpleſs object, without a due compenſation being, in ſome ſhape, made by the parents, as before ſtated. In the event of an im-

becile child living to be upwards of ſeven years of age, and its parents having, from time to time, conformed to ſuch regulations of the aſſociation, as may in thoſe caſes be made and provided, they ſhould be entitled to any allowance the viſiting committee may award, not exceeding one half of the leaſt weekly earnings of any child in their family, or having none other, then to any ſum not exceeding one fourth of what the impotent child would have been entitled to, had the ſum, previouſly paid for it, been made on the value of its own earnings. This regulated allowance ſhould continue until the child be fourteen years of age, after which, the viſiting committee ſhould have no power to award a greater ſum whilſt it remains under its parent's care, than five ſhillings *per* week.

As it is not impoſſible that a miſerable being of this deſcription ſhould be the parent of a legitimate child or children, it may be neceſſary to obſerve, that all proviſion for ſuch child or children muſt be derived from the ſane parent; in the event of whoſe death the child or children muſt be conſidered as orphans, and come under the regulations propoſed for ſuch unfortunate children.

In the event of married women dying, and leaving a child or children, under ſeven years of age, the widowers will be entitled

to ſuch an allowance as the viſiting committee ſhall award, not exceeding two thirds of the average ſum on which the huſband's payments for the wife, had been made for weeks, previouſly to her deceaſe.

On the death of married men, the widows ſhould be entitled, during three months, to ſuch an adjudged allowance, as the viſiting committee may think ſufficient, not exceeding what her own payments would have entitled her to, before her marriage; or a moiety of the ſum on which her late huſband's payments had been made for ten weeks, previouſly to his having been rendered incapable of labour, or to the time of his death

If the widow be left pregnant, or have a child, or children, the youngeſt of whom require her nurſing, the allowance for her own ſupport ſhould be extended in proportion to the age, and conſtitution of her infant to months; and ſhe ſhould alſo be entitled, for the reſt of her family ſo long as they may live, and not exceed ſeven years of age, to any allowance the viſiting committee may judge requiſite, not exceeding the following ſums:

For one Child . . . . 1*s.* 8*d.*
For two Children . . 3*s.* 4*d.*
For three ditto . . . 5*s.* 0*d.*
For four ditto . . . 6*s.* 8*d.*
For five ditto . . . 8*s.* 4*d.*
For ſix ditto . . . 10*s.* 0*d.*

For every other child, not exceeding 10 years of age, the widow ſhould be entitled to any adjudged relief *per* week, not exceeding a ſum equal to the whole amount of ſuch child, or childrens' weekly earnings, and for every other child exceeding the age of 10, and under 14 years of age, any ſum that may be awarded by the viſiting committee, not exceeding a moiety of ſuch child, or childrens' weekly earnings.

If the widow die, and leave an orphan child, ſo long as it may live and not exceed ſeven years of age, it ſhould be entitled to any allowance as above, not exceeding for ſuch

one orphan Child . . . . . 2*s.* 1*d.*
For two orphan Children . . . 4*s.* 2*d.*
For three ditto . . . . . 6*s.* 3*d.*
For four ditto . . . . . 8*s.* 4*d.*
For five ditto . . . . 10*s.* 5*d.*
For ſix ditto . . . . 12*s.* 6*d.*

The great object of this deſign, next to providing againſt poverty, is to make every individual a good member of the community: a ſtrict

and careful attention to the rearing of children, and giving them an early habit of induſtry, is indiſpenſably requiſite, and alone the ground-work from which this benefit can poſſibly be derived.

Children are entirely dependent on parents and teachers for tuition and habits of induſtry. At their arbitrary will is induſtry held to create or repreſs it in the riſing generation. Children of indolent diſpoſitions ought to be rouſed to active purſuits. The want of ſomething to do, foſters the natural apathy, and increaſes the diſorder. Uſeful employment properly directed and judiciouſly rewarded, is in ſuch ſubjects a cure for the diſeaſe; whilſt in others of quick parts and lively imagination, it reſtrains within due bounds that alertneſs which might induce frivolous or unworthy avocations, deſtructive of their own future happineſs and proſperity, and dangerous to ſociety. Idleneſs, or time miſapplied in youth, infallibly leads to vicious habits. Indolence muſt ever be conſidered as the parent of want. To early education is the future man indebted for the impreſſions his character receives; on this depends all the advantages that can ariſe to the individual, all the conſequence and importance that can diſtinguiſh the ſociety of a country. Is it not then much to be regretted as a matter of policy, though it may be diſregarded as a point of morality, that the rearing of poor children in the

practice of doing that which may be beneficial to them as men, ſhould have been ſo long, ſo impolitically, and ſo immorally neglected! It is alſo a very important conſideration for children to be taught, that every farthing they earn in the vigour of their youth, is on a certainty laying by ſomething for the infirmities of age*.

The affectionate concern which all parents have, or *ought* to have, for the well doing and proſperity of their children, will teach them, when they ſhall be confident in the utility of the propoſed meaſure, vigilantly to guard againſt youthful idleneſs, and carefully to inculcate this wholeſome doctrine; that "a penny worth of induſtry in youth, will provide a pound's worth of comfort in old age."

But as the perſons to whoſe care the rearing of orphans may be committed, cannot be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs generally that anxious parental ſolicitude for the future ſucceſs of the children entruſted to them; it will be expedient they ſhould be tempted to do that from motives of intereſt, to which parents are ſufficiently ſtimulated by motives of affection.

* Nothing ſurely can be a more impreſſive, or furniſh ſtronger evidence of the greatly good conſequences which ariſe to the youth of both ſexes, than the admirable inſtitution of the ſpinning-feaſt, and the honorable diſtinctions conferred on merit by lord and lady Harcourt, at Newnham.

In ſtating the allowance *per* week for ſix orphan children; five-pence for each child, or half a crown a week on the ſix, hath been added for the ſervices of the ſoſter parent, whilſt the reſpective ages of the children ſhall not exceed ſeven years. After any one hath attained this age, and until it be twelve, or for ſuch as were above ſeven, and under twelve years of age, at the time of their parents' death; the parties having the charge of ſuch children, ſhould be allowed any ſum, not exceeding the weekly earnings of ſuch children, in lieu of the former ſtipend. Should any one or more of ſuch orphan children be naturally incapable of earning a livelihood, and ſhould ſuch incapacity not be diſcovered before the death of the parents, the total amount of each parent's ſubſcriptions balance ſhould be adverted to, which, when added together, would enable the viſiting committee to determine on ſuch an allowance as reaſonably ought to be awarded in places where no benefit can be derived from donations, not exceeding 6*s.* 8*d.* *per* week for each of ſuch imperfect children, although arrived at years of maturity.

In caſes of illegitimacy, the law ſhould be watchfully and ſtrictly carried into execution. No pains ſhould be ſpared to aſcertain the father, immediately on diſcovering the pregnancy. Beſides the uſual order for the maintenance of the

child, an additional one for at leaſt 10*s.* ſhould be made upon the father, to provide his infant with neceſſaries, and the mother with ſome few comforts during her travail. Theſe orders originating in the vigilance of the committee appointed for ſuch purpoſes, ſhould be lodged with the receiver of the weekly ſubſcriptions (ſuppoſe the clergyman) in the pariſh or diſtrict where the reputed father may reſide. Should he neglect advancing the money for the mother's confinements, or omit paying afterwards the weekly ſtipend for the maintenance of his child, on application to the receiver, the money in either caſe ſhould be advanced by him, out of the ſociety's funded property in his hands. On the repayment of each ſum ſo advanced, five *per cent.* ſhould be charged to the father. Should the repayment be neglected, and a ſecond application by the mother be made to the receiver the following week, it ſhould again be advanced, in which caſe 10 *per cent.* ſhould become due on the firſt payment, and five on the ſecond. If ſuch payments are neglected by the father, it were more than probable that the weekly ſubſcription on his own labour were neglected alſo. In ordinary caſes it has been propoſed that ſimilar omiſſions might be permitted, to be repeated for a month, but under circumſtances like the preſent, after repayment ſhould contemptuouſly be diſregarded for a

fortnight, notice of the default ſhould publickly, on the ſucceeding Sunday be given, with ſevere reprehenſions in the church; and tickets ſhould be ſent round to the employers in the pariſh or diſtrict in which the reputed father may reſide, ſtating the amount of his arrears; and the perſon in whoſe employ he may be, as in the former inſtance of neglect, ſhould become immediately reſponſible to the funds of the aſſociation for ſuch repayment.

Whatever may be the balance of the father's ſubſcribed property, the removal of it ſhould be interdicted, until theſe arrears were diſcharged. Thus will it be impoſſible he ſhould eſcape doing that which is right, becauſe it will be impracticable for him to gain admittance into any other aſſociation, and conſequently he will be unable to become reſident in any other pariſh or diſtrict.

During the mother's confinement, and ſo long as ſhe remain unable to work, ſhe ſhould be entitled to ſuch ſupport as may be reaſonable, in proportion to her former ſubſcription. But as her having been rendered thus incapable of ſupporting herſelf was in conſequence of her departure from chaſtity, and the effect of her own indiſcretion, one half of the money ſhe may have been ſupplied with, during her confinement, ſhould, by inſtallments, with five *per cent.*

thereon, be repaid on her again returning to her employment. During the life of any ſuch baſtard child or children, and until they ſhall exceed fourteen years of age, the father and the mother, each, in addition to their reſpective ſubſcriptions on their own labour, ſhould pay one penny *per* week for each of ſuch children. In the event of the mother being unable to maintain herſelf, ſhe ſhould be entitled to what may be awarded her by the viſiting committee, not exceeding the average ſum on which her own ſubſcriptions had been paid, deriving no advantage whatever from any ſubſcription paid by the father of her child or children. But ſhould ſuch child or children, whilſt under ſeven years of age, require medical or other aſſiſtance, not in the power of the mother to ſupply, or ſhould ſuch child or children become orphans, in ſuch caſes they ſhould be ſubjected to the like regulations, and entitled to the ſame allowance, as would have been awarded by the viſiting committee, had ſuch child or children been born in wedlock.

The foregoing arrangements are confined to the payment of the five *per cent.* and affording relief to thoſe members of the employed ſociety who are conſtantly engaged in the produce, or internal trade or manufacture of England. Each of theſe members having a ſpecific place of abode, may be conſidered as ſtationary, when

compared to thoſe in the ſame ſociety, whoſe lives being devoted to the external commerce or protection of the empire, have no particular reſidence, though a general home in this country. This tranſitory ſociety includes all ſea-faring people, whether in the merchant's employment, or in the ſervice of government; the army, and all perſons in a civil line, engaged in a diplomatic capacity abroad, or in other foreign ſervice of the ſtate. Some few of the ſailors only employed by the merchants, and a leſs proportion belonging to his Majeſty's ſhips of war, are married men. The former are not unfrequently, with their wives and families, pariſhioners at the ſame port to which the veſſel they navigate belongs: the wives and families of the latter are often reſident at Portſmouth, and other places of naval rendezvous.

The boarding and lodging of ſailors, taken at ſo much *per* day, ſhould, with their wages, be aſcertained, and the five *per cent.* thereon, on each man's quota, ſhould, previouſly to his being paid off or diſcharged, be calculated, and by the ſhip's huſband in the merchant's ſervice, or by the proper officer in that of the King's, be paid over to the appointed receiver, by whom ſeparate and diſtinct receipts for each man's ſubſcription ſhould be given. From this claſs of the employed ſociety it might as eaſily be collected

as the ſix-pence *per* month for the uſe of Greenwich-hoſpital, at the ſeveral cuſtom-houſes, either from the ſhips' huſbands, as before obſerved, or the commanders of merchants' veſſels; and from the reſpective officers appointed to pay off his Majeſty's ſhips at the ſeveral dock-yards. Theſe gentlemen might be directed to account, either with the parochial or diſtrict receiver near them; or the officers at the dock-yards might transmit a certificate of the ſum due on this account from government, to the general treaſury in London, which ſhould there be received as ſo much money. Similar inſtruments might likewiſe once a month, or once a quarter, be iſſued by each army agent, ſetting forth the five *per cent.* due from government on the boarding, lodging, clothes, and pay (excluſive of the pay and incidental charges paid to officers) on the ſeveral regiments whoſe buſineſs they tranſact. Theſe vouchers might be tranſmitted, as before ſuggeſted, or accepted by the appointed receiver, and remitted by him to the general treaſury as caſh. With little trouble could the five *per cent.* on each individual's pay, clothes, and allowance be aſcertained, on whoſe diſcharge, or removal from one regiment to another, or from time to time as hereafter ſhould be found requiſite, a certificate ſhould be granted him, ſpecifying the amount of his ſubſcription during the continuance of his ſerving in any re-

giment, from which he ſhould be ſo diſcharged, or removed. On the payment of ſailors' wages, or on the diſcharge of any ſoldier, ſuch certificate or receipt, each individual ſhould have the power of demanding; who ſhould on theſe occaſions be inſtructed that his future convenience in readily obtaining temporary aſſiſtance, or ſecuring the propoſed annuities, will be greatly dependent on his care of theſe valuable documents. A ſailor, generally ſpeaking, is ſo thoughtleſs a being, and ſo totally indifferent as to what in future may befal him, and at the ſame time, ſo uſeful a member of the community, that from his general characteriſtick——*taking no care of himſelf*, he becomes an object of particular care to others, who are ſo much indebted to his ſervices. The regiſter of ſeamen whch is now kept at moſt ports for the muſter-roll, would, if properly attended to, and correctly made, be an important convenience, not only to the individual but to the nation on various occaſions.

The number of this tranſitory ſociety, who have homes, is ſo ſmall, that no ſpecial proviſion need, or indeed could be made for affixing them to any particular aſſociation, until they may become ſtationary, by giving up their former occupations.

On theſe occaſions, whatever may be the balance of each individual's ſubſcription, on being

regularly aſcertained and certified, he ſhould have immediate credit for that ſum, in the aſſociation he enters; and ſhould then be conſidered as ſtationary, and in all reſpects under the ſame regulations as the reſident members.

To the annuity propoſed for perſons in the advanced periods of life, the tranſitory ſociety will, in common with the ſtationary, be equally entitled, under the like circumſtances and conditions.

In addition to which, every perſon who ſhall have ſerved his Majeſty, either in the character of a ſailor or a ſoldier, ſhould be entitled to an annuity for life, in proportion to the time their country hath been benefited by ſuch ſervices. It may probably be objected, that the ſtate will not readily conſent to the additional payment of ſo large a ſum as five *per cent.* on the boarding, lodging, and wages of the ſailors, and the ſubſiſtence, clothes, and pay of the ſoldiers.

The propoſed annuities to ſailors and ſoldiers, would, in effect, make great compenſation and return to the treaſury, by precluding in a conſiderable degree any future neceſſity of impreſſing for the navy, and the exorbitant bounties on raiſing men for the army.

In times only of war, or an armament, would government be liable to this ſubſcription, to any great extent, whilſt the whole community at all

times would be providing for the general defence of the country, by ſecuring to thoſe who ſhould enter, or enliſt, ſuch permanent benefits.

The inhabitants of Ireland, North Britain, and all foreigners employed by government, or in the external commerce of England, ſhould, on all temporary occaſions of poverty, be awarded the ſame relief in proportion to their ſubſcriptions as Engliſhmen; but ſhould not be entitled either to the annuity granted to aged perſons, or to that propoſed as a recompence for military ſervice, unleſs ſuch perſons ſhould have entered into the government or mercantile ſervice of the country previouſly to the age of eighteen, had continued therein ſeven years, and was a reſident inhabitant, or continued in the ſervice or employment of Great Britain or Ireland.

On ſingle or married men, below the rank or ſtation of a midſhipman, and belonging to any of his Majeſty's ſhips of war, tranſports, revenue cutters, or other veſſels employed in the ſervice of government, (whether the ſame be in or out of commiſſion) the boarding and lodging of each ſeaman may be eſtimated at £. 19 : 10 : 0; boys under 16 years of age at £. 13 : 13 : 4 *per ann.* and their wages taken at the reſpective ſums actually paid.

On ſingle or married men, navigating any ſhip or veſſel, and below the ſtation of maſter, or

commander of ſuch ſhip or veſſel, belonging to any port or place in England, and trading to foreign parts, the boarding and lodging of each ſailor may be eſtimated at £.18:5:0; boys under 16 years of age at £.13 *per ann*; their wages ſhould be taken at the reſpective ſums actually paid, and their perquiſites at a fair valuation.

On the like claſs of mariners employed in the coaſting trade of the iſland, the board and lodging may be eſtimated at £.17:6:8; boys under 16 years of age at £.11:10:0; their wages ſhould be taken at the ſums actually paid, and their perquiſites at a fair valuation.

On ſingle or married men belonging to any regiment, whether horſe or foot, the militia, and all fencible corps in his Majeſty's ſervice, the ſubſiſtence and clothes of each ſoldier, below the rank of enſign or cornet, may be eſtimated at £.26 *per ann.* and the expence of their lodging, whether in barracks, or on billet, ſhould be taken at the actual ſum allowed by the ſtate, to the ſeveral ranks or ſtations in each regiment*.

* The annual expence of ſubſiſting, clothing, and agency, on a regiment of dragoons, excluſive of pay and all allowances to the officers, amounts to £.21352. The like expence for a regiment of foot, amounts to £.14470. The mean of theſe ſums is £.17911. Now admit there are, on an average, ſeven hundred men in each regiment, the yearly expence for each ſoldier, cannot be rated leſs than £.26.

To every ſailor, ſoldier, or militia man, on being adjudged by the viſiting committee incapable of obtaining his future livelihood, in conſequence of his having been wounded in battle, or by accident in any other ſervice for his country, the annuity which at that time may be awarded to perſons exceeding ſixty-three years of age, ſhould, immediately on his diſcharge from the ſervice of government, be granted, and the payment thereof ſhould regularly be continued during his natural life, unleſs, as in every other caſe, the perſon to whom ſuch annuity may be granted, ſhould, by any fortuitous event, become poſſeſſed of a ſufficient income comfortably to provide for his wants without ſuch aſſiſtance. In addition to which bounty, the following annuities ſhould become due, and payable to every perſon who ſhall have ſerved in the character of a ſoldier, either in the army or militia; or in the character of a ſailor on board any of his Majeſty's ſhips of war, or other veſſels employed under government, viz.

	£.	s.		£.	s.
For one year's ſervice	0	10	Eight years ſervice	5	10
two ditto - -	1	0	nine ditto - - -	6	10
three ditto - -	2	0	ten ditto - - -	7	10
four ditto - -	2	10	eleven ditto - -	8	0
five ditto - -	3	10	twelve ditto - -	8	10
ſix ditto - - -	4	0	thirteen ditto - -	9	0
ſeven ditto - -	5	0	fourteen ditto - -	10	0

And for every year's ſervice, exceeding fourteen years, a conſtant addition of 20*s.* a year. Certificates ſhould be granted to all ſailors' and ſoldiers' wives ſerving abroad, to entitle their families at home to the proper allowances according to the ſtation their huſbands may have in the navy or army. As neither ſailor's wages, nor the pay of the army and militia, are ſubject to deduction on any temporary inability to perform duty, it ſhould ſeem fair and equitable that ſo long as individuals are incapable of ſervice, and are nurſed and ſupported in hoſpitals or otherways, at the expence of government, that the treaſury of the five *per cent.* ſhould be accountable for a certain ſhare of ſuch hoſpital, or other expences, in proportion to the number of ſick or wounded, and the time that each individual ſhall have been ſo nurſed and ſupported by government.

If the aſſiſtance, ariſing from the charitable donations to ſome particular pariſhes, which can little apply to the general neceſſities of the kingdom be excepted, the ſucceſs of the foregoing ſyſtem will be found, in a great meaſure, to depend on the proviſion alone which the five *per cent.* on labour will inſure. Yet, if labour be not performed, the funds thence accruing will not exiſt, nor can the promiſed relief thence derivable, be obtained. It is therefore a matter

of the higheſt political conſequence, and moſt important conſideration, that ſuch regard ſhould be had to the means of employment, that the induſtrious ſhould at all times have the power of applying their talents to effect; and, that the idle ſhould have neither excuſe nor pretence for indulging unworthy propenſities, becauſe work was not to be procured.

The accompliſhment of this part of the plan, may, perhaps, appear extremely difficult; but as difficulties are generally half ſubdued when once attempted, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the ſame earneſt deſire which prompts the ſuperior claſſes in this country to provide ſo liberally againſt the preſent miſery of the other, will make them readily ſubſcribe to the beſt means that ſhall be ſuggeſted for effecting this moſt deſirable purpoſe.

Should the animadverſions on the general management of work-houſes, contained in the firſt part of this addreſs, be inſufficient to convince the publick mind that ſuch inſtitutions intended for the employment of the poor, are not leſs derogatory to the ſpirit of our bleſſed conſtitution, than morally unjuſt; on reference to Sir William Young's very able letter, of the 18th of March laſt, to the Right Hon. William Pitt, the moſt impreſſive reaſoning, and concluſive arguments will therein be found, proving

that the regulations of the preſent laws by which work-houſes and poor-houſes are conducted, are deſtructive of every moral principle, and political intereſt.

Under theſe circumſtances it may not be conſidered unreaſonably intruſive to call the publick attention on any new means for employment being meditated to the ſyſtem ſo ſucceſsfully purſued by the Philanthropic Society. The difficulties with which this noble inſtitution hath had to ſtruggle, have been innumerable; theſe are invariably the attendant conſequences on every undertaking whoſe object is to reform old practices, and produce new habits. Yet have not the ſpirits of the laudable, the benevolent projectors been diſmayed, nor have they abated of their zeal in the great cauſe of humanity, in which they have thus voluntarily engaged. They have proſecuted their original deſign with firmneſs, and have received the heart-felt ſatisfaction in return, of not only having reſcued many fellow-creatures from impending diſgrace and ignominy, but of ſeeing them gradually abandoning their former vicious inclinations, and finally becoming valuable members of the community.

When the ſubſiſting, erroneous, and impolitic management of work-houſes, and other receptacles for the poor, ſo juſtly and ſo pointedly

reprobated by Sir William Young, ſhall give place to a more rational ſyſtem, the buildings now appropriated to ſuch uſes would eaſily be converted into ſchools of education and induſtry for youth, and into work-ſhops of trades and manufactures for adults.

In addition to the preſent general employment of ſpinning only, carpenters, wheel-wrights, black-ſmiths, weavers, ſhoemakers' ſhops, and ſhops of other general trades ſhould be immediately furniſhed. The capital, requiſite for implements and materials, ſhould be advanced by the treaſurer of the five *per cent.* and paid to the perſons from whom ſuch neceſſaries were procured, by warrant or draft at *three* months after date, which having undergone due examination, might be iſſued by the ſuperintendant of each department or trade. This officer ſhould be a ſkilful perſon of known good character, who, with at leaſt two reſponſible perſons, ſhould give ample ſecurity for the faithful execution of the truſt and employment committed to his charge, and whoſe ſervices ſhould be ſufficiently rewarded to make his ſituation worth preſerving, by allowing him *a per centage on the clear profits* ariſing out of the labour of the ſeveral perſons under his direction.

In the event of its being inconvenient to women who may have families, to ſhoemakers,

taylors, or perſons of any other trade or buſineſs to repair to ſuch warehouſes or work-ſhops, though not incapable of employment at home, the materials on which they reſpectively can work, if of a portable deſcription, ſhould, under proper regulations, be furniſhed them at their own houſes.

Articles of apparel, bedding, and other houſehold conveniencies and utenſils, could here be procured in great abundance. With theſe ſhould the parochial ſhops be ſupplied, and printed liſts, containing every article provided by theſe univerſal manufactories, ſpecifying the price at which ſuch ſhop-keepers ſhould vend them, ſhould be adjuſted by the magiſtrates at every quarter-ſeſſions. To theſe parochial ſhops would the employed ſociety reſort, and with ready money not only furniſh themſelves with commodities of the beſt quality and workmanſhip, but at ſuch a reduced price, as would render his ſhilling on all occaſions worth that which he receives it for, *namely, twelve pence.*

The new printed "bill for amending and enforcing the laws for the relief, inſtruction, and employment of the poor, prepared according to the plan opened by Mr. Pitt to the Houſe of Commons in the preſent ſeſſion of Parliament," certainly contains many humane and wiſe regulations, which, under his able direction

will no doubt be ſtill greatly improved. Theſe, when enacted, cannot fail of adminiſtering in a high degree to the future happineſs, relief, and comfort of thoſe for whoſe benefit the bill is intended. The 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th ſections authorizing advances to be made in certain caſes to perſons entitled to aſſiſtance, would perhaps be attended with better effect, were the monies ſo advanced, lent only, inſtead of given. If a neceſſitous man could *borrow* a ſufficient ſum to buy him a cow, or to prevent him, in time of need, the cruel neceſſity of ſelling that which his induſtry hath procured, and could have permiſſion to repay the money ſo borrowed by inſtalments, it would be a daily ſpur to his exertions, and his mind would not experience that degradation by this ſpecies of mortgage, which it muſt ever ſuffer, on accepting pariſh bounty.

So long as poor's rates are impoſed, or voluntary ſubſcriptions are ſolicited and obtained from the ſociety of the employers, and *they alone* continue to have the ſole ordering, management, and diſtribution of the money ſo raiſed, a neceſſity will exiſt that a ſettlement ſhould be acquired (as in the 9th ſection) to entitle the other ſociety to the benefits thence ariſing. Whilſt a ſettlement continues to be the *indiſpenſable condition* on which alone aſſiſtance can be procured, one of

the moſt lamentable cauſes of the preſent miſery will ſtill remain unredreſſed. Beſides vaſt detail and trouble which is incurred by this often undefined qualification, the enormous expences to obtain legal deciſions on this queſtion will ſtill continue to impoveriſh thoſe funds collected for the ſacred purpoſe of charitable uſes. Too much praiſe cannot be beſtowed on the benevolence exhibited in the 11th, 26th, 29th, and 31ſt ſections, and on the wiſdom and policy of many other proviſions, made for the employment, regulation, and management of the poor: yet it is much to be regretted that ſome means are not deviſed for carrying ſuch regulations into execution without reſorting ſo repeatedly to the juſtices of the peace for authority and directions. It is well known in the army, that a drum head court-martial, or enquiries by the ſoldiers into the miſdemeanors of their comrades, are not leſs attended with excellently good conſequences in the prevention of irregularities, than they are ſevere in the adjudication of puniſhments. This circumſtance alone authorizes an opinion that if reference on certain occaſions were made to the parties themſelves, and powers were given them under certain reſtrictions to exerciſe their judgment collectively, in the ordering and management of the internal affairs of their ſociety, great relief might

be afforded to the laborious taſk which the preſent bill enjoins, and impoſes upon the magiſtrates, eſpecially upon thoſe acting in the country, where no reward awaits their ſervices, and where their time at preſent is already inconveniently dedicated to this troubleſome and unthankful office.

The ſpirit and principle of this new bill clearly evinces the greateſt ſolicitude, the moſt earneſt deſire to provide for the future employment, and effectually contribute to the general comfort of the employed ſociety: and though the former ſyſtem is ſtill in part adopted and purſued, yet many of its exceptionable directions are charitably done away. This encourages all good men to hope, that other oppreſſive reſtrictions, which ſo long, and ſo cruelly, have operated againſt the political intereſt of the ſtate, and the lowly condition of its ſuffering, though peaceful inhabitants, will not long remain a reproach to the humanity of the freeſt government under the canopy of heaven.

Under this impreſſion, the general adoption of the meaſures now ſuggeſted, or others founded on more rational principles may reaſonably be expected. The abandoning of an old ſyſtem which hath exiſted for upwards of two centuries, undoubtedly requires much caution, and a tho-

rough conviction, that the new one propoſed will effectually provide againſt the inconveniencies which have hitherto been experienced, and that its operations in future will not be liable to ſimilar oppreſſions.

So far as the internal and ſpecific regulations of the Friendly Societies correſpond with the plan recommended, and ſo far as theſe ſocieties have uniformly been attended with the promiſed ſucceſs to that extent, may the experiment be conſidered as having been made; yet in the contemplation of ſo extenſive a reform, it may, perhaps, be conſidered moſt prudent and wiſe, before any general alteration ſhould take place, to try the utility and value of the propoſed ſyſtem, by making the experiments in certain diſtricts of the country, in order to aſcertain its operation in rural affairs; and with ſome large bodies of the employed ſocieties in cities and towns, to prove its effects on the manufacturing and commercial intereſts of the kingdom. It would be extremely fortunate if ſome leading perſons in the northern, eaſtern, weſtern, and ſouthern parts of England, would, in each ſituation, give it a fair trial, on an extenſive ſcale, by uniting three, four, or more pariſhes together for this eſpecial purpoſe; and for which an act of Parliament might be obtained to empower

them ſo to do, without being liable to the regulations and directions of the preſent poor's laws, whilſt ſuch experiment ſhould continue.

The authority and importance of the Eaſt India Company, render it, perhaps, the moſt fit to make the experiment with the other order of ſociety. Regarding the manual labour of the employed, this powerful aſſociation combines both intereſts of the manufacturer and merchant. The number of ſtationary daily labourers employed in the company's warehouſes is very great, and the number of tranſitory perſons engaged in the company's external commerce is infinitely greater; as ſuch, ſhould the court of directors be ſo far impreſſed with a favorable opinion, as to make trial of the new meaſures, it would greatly tend to eſtabliſh the propriety of their becoming general under the ſanction of the legiſlature, or to diſcover the impracticability of their being enforced with ſucceſs.

It is by no means an eaſy taſk to aſcertain the number of labourers engaged in the manufactures of England*. Could theſe be as correctly enu-

* In the year 1772, the value of labour employed in the production of the woollen manufactures and Rochdale bays, in Yorkſhire *only*, amounted to £. 2,416,467 : 3 : 9. The ſpace of ground occupied by the manufacturers, equal to a ſquare of thirty miles, about one half of which are moors and waſte grounds.

merated as the number of ſeamen * is aſcertained, it would be extremely deſirable, as by that means the five *per cent.* would be eaſily computed on the earnings of the ſociety employed in the manufactures and commerce of the kingdom. Was this *per centage* to fall alone on the articles of home conſumption, it would be of little importance. The price to conſumers would be raiſed in proportion, and in this ſhape, inſtead of government taxes, would they ſubſcribe towards the exigencies of the ſtate, by providing bounties and annuities for manning the navy, and recruiting the army. But as a very conſiderable proportion of Engliſh goods are purpoſely wrought for exportation, even the ſimple addition of five *per cent.* on the labour employed in producing them, might poſſibly deſtroy the preſent competition in foreign markets. This diſadvantage will equally apply to the carrying trade, and muſt be acknowledged a conſideration that may operate againſt the general ſubſcription on the productive labour of the king-

* No. of ſeamen in foreign trade of *England*.

	Coaſts.	Fiſhing trade.	Total.
1791 54,812	 29,228	 9714	 87,754
1792 40,941	 23,430	 9585	 73,956
1793 39,018	 22,079	 9770	 70,867

Admit the board, lodging, and wages of ſailors, averaged in peace and war, to be £. 36 *per annum*, on the mean of theſe three years, it would amount to £. 2,790,936.

dom: yet as no general good can be attained, that in ſome inſtances will not operate as a partial evil, the apprehenſion of a total rejection of the propoſed meaſures, ſhould not, on this ſcore, be encouraged; eſpecially when it ſhall be underſtood, that there is every reaſon to believe, that if the total amount of wages paid for labour in England, could be obtained at a much lower *per centage*, than even two and a half *per cent.* thereon, ſubſcribed, protected, and diſburſed, under the immediate direction and ſanction of the law, would be found completely adequate, and amply ſufficient for all the purpoſes herein recommended.

That ſome melioration to the lowly condition of the members of the employed ſociety ſhould be afforded by Parliament, is incontrovertible. That any temporary relief or mitigation of their ſufferings would, like former legiſlative endeavours of a ſimilar nature prove ineffectual, is certain. That a permanent and complete removal of thoſe evils, which the exiſting laws, from time to time have induced, is the only ſtate meaſure that with ſound policy can be reſorted to, is unqueſtionable: and that any ſyſtem which in its operation might have the power of affecting this great benevolent purpoſe, would be extremly deſirable, cannot be denied. The haſty ſketch, or outline, now ſubmitted to the publick, is of-

fered under no preſumption of its poſſeſſing a merit beyond its practicability; and is to be conſidered as the ſkeleton only of a plan, founded on the experiments that have already been ſucceſsfully carried into execution by the friendly ſocieties; the virtuous conſtitutions of which are at length likely to be juſtly regarded, as the beſt model on which any future deſign can be erected, that may generally, and permanently, ſecure the employed ſociety from *Poverty*.

FINIS.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

ERRATA.

Page. Line.

7 — 16 — *for* There, *read* Theſe.
11 — 12 — *for* indulgence which, *r.* indulgence of which.
ibid. — 13 — had enjoyment, *r.* had the enjoyment.
21 — 23 — employed in, *r.* employed except in.
26 — 11 — for even, *r.* ever,
37 — 19 — *after* poverty, *for* comma *add* ſemicolon.
ibid. — 20 — maxims, *dele the* s.
74 — 25 — friendly ſocieties *ought to have been in capitals*—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.
78 — 29 — *the like correction.*
87 — 14 — *begin a new paragraph at*, A very.
90 — 13 — *for* man, *r.* men.
108 — 1 — *for* hour frequently, *r.* hour muſt frequently.
111 — 11 — *for* one ſingle, *r.* on ſingle.
ibid. — 12 — *for* man, or ſingle woman, *r.* men, or ſingle women.
121 — 5 — *for* weeks, *r.* ten weeks.
ibid. — 22 — *for* months, *r.* nine months.
124 — *1ſt line in note, dele* a.
127 — *laſt line, for* inſtallments, *r.* inſtalments.
140 — 20 — *for* his ſhilling, *r.* their ſhilling.
ibid. — 21 — *for* he receives, *r.* they receive.
147 — 8 — *for* be obtained, *add* a comma—*dele* at.